

**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING
BAND IN MOPANI DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that “The role of school managers in the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the Further Education and Training band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province” is my own original work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

Mr. Ramalepe ML

Date

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my lovely wife, Sarah, and my two precious kids, Hareaipha and Horeloketsi Ramalepe.

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First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge that it was through God's favour that inspired me to successfully complete this project. To Him be the glory.

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the role of school managers in addressing challenges associated with the implementation of continuous assessment (CASS) in the Further Education and Training (FET) band in Mopani District. It furthermore investigates to what degree school managers in the district engage in performing the “traditional” leadership and management roles which create a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of CASS.

A thorough literature review provides an understanding of the emerging trends and challenges in the implementation of CASS internationally. Most of these challenges are analogous with those constraining the implementation of CASS in Mopani District. The data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires from purposively sampled district educators and school management teams (SMTs) who came from randomly selected schools. The findings enumerated the insufficient training for school managers and infrequency of performing “traditional” leadership and management roles as some of the factors hampering the implementation of CASS in the district schools.

KEY WORDS

Continuous Assessment, implementation, traditional leadership and management roles, Further Education and Training band, learners' absenteeism, parent involvement, monitoring and support, moderation, teaching and learning resources, educators' workload.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AS	Assessment Standard
CAA	Continuous Assessment Accountability
CASS	Continuous Assessment
CTA	Continuous Task of Assessment
DOE	Department of Education
EFA	Education For All
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
HET	Higher Education and Training
HOD	Head of Department
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
IAEA	International Association for Education Assessment
IPO	Input – Process – Output
LDOE	Limpopo Department of Education
LO	Learning Outcome
LPG	Learning Programme Guideline
MEC	Member of Executive Council
MOE	Ministry of Education
MSU	Michigan State University
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers’ Organisation of South Africa
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OBE	Outcomes Based Education

OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SAG	Subject Assessment Guidelines
SASA	South African Schools Act
SMT	School Management Team
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America
WCDOE	Western Cape Department of Education

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Cuban (1988: xx) links leadership with change while management is seen as maintenance activity. Espousing on this, Hoy and Miskel (2001:391) state that leaders are important because they serve as anchors, provide guidance in times of change, and are responsible for the effectiveness of organisation. On the basis of the foregoing, I argue that the successful implementation of continuous assessment (CASS) policy in the Further Education and Training (FET) band requires the “objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment wise leadership provides” (Bolman & Deal, 1997: xiii-xiv). Furthermore, I argue that the successful implementation of CASS in schools will depend, among other things, on an ability by the school managers to influence staff’ actions as well as efficiently and effectively maintaining organisational structures.

The challenges confronting the continuous assessment policy have always betrayed the purpose it intended to achieve in the South African FET schools. In order to address these challenges, this research suggests that the leadership and management perspective is crucial to optimise utilisation of staff potential. In short, this research is an attempt to investigate and explain the role that should be played by school managers in the implementation of the new CASS policy in the Mopani District, Limpopo Province, and further examines the extent at which the school managers in the district perform the “traditional” leadership and management roles such as the instructional leadership, management of parent involvement, learner management, motivation, and monitoring and support.

In this chapter, I provide the orientation to the problem – how I became conscious of the problem in the context of my own school and other schools in the district. The chapter also provides the aims and objectives, methodology and the preliminary literature review.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The change in the assessment policy was introduced in the FET schools in 2001 by the former Minister of Education, Prof. Kader Asmal. Alausa (2003:2) ascribed one advantage of CASS to the fact that it places teachers at the centre of all performance-assessment activities and that it encourages more teacher participation in the overall assessment or grading of learners. He further states that this new assessment model is used to determine the learner's achievement during the course of the grade or level, and to provide information that is used to support a learner's development and enable improvements to be made in the learning and teaching process.

Although the change in the assessment policy was intended to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, it also introduced schools to the challenges associated with the implementation of educational change. The argument presented in this study is simply that every change produces new information and concepts which create challenges. The change in assessment policy calls for a realignment of existing values, practices and outcomes (Morrison, 1998:11). Alausa (2003:3) identified some of the problems working against the proper implementation of CASS which calls for the realignment of values, practices and outcomes in schools. Some of the challenges that are associated with educators include a lack of skills in test construction and test administration, attitudes towards CASS, and record keeping. For CASS implementation to succeed, Alausa (2003:3) argues that teachers need to give more tests and that will result in more marking for the teachers. They are expected to constantly observe learners to see if they are progressing towards the set outcomes. All these could mean more work for the teachers, greater demands on their time, and increased responsibility.

A related issue identified by Adebowale and Alao (2008:7) is that of collation where scores may have to be combined from different sources using various weights. These authors further add that teachers must be prepared professionally and mentally for operating the new assessment system. If the teacher is not adequately prepared for operating the CASS system, it may lead to a tendency to manufacture scores in the name of CASS. From the viewpoint of the learners, CASS can mean too many projects from too many educators at the same time and the fact that wealthy learners are given an unfair advantage over poor learners as they would have greater access to

resources. In their paper read at the International Association for Education Assessment (IAEA) Conference in 2008, Kapambwe and Mulenga (2008:6-7) identified other challenges which are also common in Mopani District: larger class sizes, staffing, remediation and enrichment, pupil absenteeism, teaching and learning resources, teacher networking, monitoring and feedback.

Late in 2009, the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshega, introduced a policy lever as an effort to reduce teachers' and learners' workload. She indicated that as from January 2010, learner portfolios will no longer be required since there will only be one administrative file for educators. She also reduced the number of projects to one per year per learning area or subject (DoE, 2009:4-5). The Minister further mentioned that the major focus is to relieve teachers and schools of some challenges experienced as a result of current curriculum and assessment policies. Ezra Ramasehla, president of the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA), called these changes as "a slimming of OBE" (*The Star*, 2009:1).

This appeared to be a move in a positive direction by the Ministry, but there remains, however, another important lever that has been overlooked by the Ministry of Education, namely, investing in school leadership and management quality and stability. This study argues that effective school leadership and management can help improve the status of CASS implementation in Mopani District and the country. Other challenges could be addressed from a "school leadership and management" perspective as they require the functions of quality control, learner management, staffing, parent management, staff motivation, and conflict management. The dilemma in the implementation process is that the school leadership force does not realise that its role has since changed. To make matters worse, the process of training and coaching leaders is gravely lacking in the district. This is a tragedy for the schools, families, communities, and nations that can benefit from effective and competent school leadership.

Myles Munroe (2008: XVI) writes: Nothing happens without leadership, nothing changes without leadership, nothing develops without leadership. Nothing improves without leadership; nothing is corrected without leadership. This entails that it would take an effective school leadership to change and correct the current status of CASS implementation in the district and

the country. Expanding on this, President Jacob Zuma, during his national interaction with school principals mentioned:

School academic performance is highly correlated with the abilities and commitment of the principal. The 'School That Works' Report, commissioned by the Department of Education in 2008, confirms the importance of school leadership and its critical role in the achievement of excellence in education. A large number of our schools that are working well displayed shared leadership qualities where principals created strong teams which plan and strategise together (The Presidency, Jacob Zuma, 2009:3).

This study postulates that the school manager's new role of dealing with challenges associated with the implementation of CASS requires that managers possess skills which will enable them to create, maintain and grow the school environment which optimises the implementation process. This calls for the Provincial Education Department to equip school managers with the necessary knowledge of the policy to ensure quality at school level. It is in this context that this study will be undertaken to examine the role of school managers in addressing challenges associated with the implementation of CASS in Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. The research problem addressed in this study is that continuous assessment is not effectively implemented in Mopani District. Reasons for or causes of ineffective implementation of this type of assessment appear to be management or leadership problems and attitudes of educators towards it as a result of lack of training. At the heart of this study is the assumption that the implementation of CASS should be driven from leadership and management perspective. Flowing from the above, the central and guiding question is as follows: *What is the role of school managers in addressing challenges associated with the implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province, and to what degree do school managers engage in performing the "traditional" leadership and management roles such as instructional leadership, the management of parent involvement, staff motivation, learners' management, and monitoring and support?* In line with the central question, the guiding research sub-questions are:

- What are the requirements for the effective implementation of CASS in the Further

Education and Training Band?

- What are the perceptions of school managers on the CASS policy?
- What are the problems working against the proper implementation of CASS?
- Which roles do school managers play in the implementation of CASS?
- What training should be provided to school managers?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to investigate the role of school managers in addressing problems working against the implementation of the CASS system in the FET band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province. The objectives of this study are to:

- Explore the requirements for the effective implementation of CASS in the FET Band.
- Determine the perceptions of school managers on the CASS policy.
- Identify the problems working against the proper implementation of CASS.
- Investigate the new roles of school managers in the implementation of CASS, and
- Suggest a training programme that should be provided to school managers.

1.5 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Over the past years, the school leadership and management models had become a priority in education policy agendas internationally. Management and leadership play a key role in improving school performance and influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers. On the basis of the foregoing, the rationale for this study is therefore, to arouse school managers' interest in driving the implementation of the continuous assessment policy in their schools from the leadership and management perspective hence addressing various challenges confronting the implementers of the policy in the district. The study is also motivated by the desire to produce some lively discourses in the country regarding the roles that school managers should play in their schools in order to create an atmosphere conducive for the implementation of the CASS policy.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

This study is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The research methodology employed in this study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. It is thus a mixed research design with a concurrent strategy of enquiry.

1.6.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

1.6.1.1 Population

The population of respondents for this study consisted of educators and the school management teams in Mopani District. The SMT members studied consisted of school principals, deputy principals and HoDs. I was interested in gaining information and drawing conclusion from this population attached to different circuits in Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

1.6.1.2 Sampling

In this study a purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. The rationale for using purposive sampling in this study was that, the six circuits under study were representative of the population and met the purpose of the study. Furthermore, teachers who filled in the questionnaires came from schools with similar characteristics as those not sampled and belonged to the natural sciences and commercial departments. The school principals, deputy principals and HoDs represented all individuals responsible for the day-to-day management of schools in Mopani District. In short, I identified information-rich respondents to gather data from.

1.6.2 DATA COLLECTION

1.6.2.1 Quantitative data collection

Questionnaires were constructed and used to solicit information from educators and school managers regarding the implementation of continuous assessment in their schools and their

general perception of the new assessment policy. The SMTs' questionnaires consisted of four sections: biographical data, knowledge on the theory and practice of CASS, perception of the school managers' new role, and general information. The educators' questionnaire was also divided into four sections, namely, biographical data, knowledge of CASS, attitudes towards CASS and some management activities, and general information.

The questionnaires included statements to which the respondents had to respond by circling the options given, e.g. 1 - 4 or 5. Different scales were used in both the questionnaires. The general section required that the respondents write down challenges encountered in the implementation of CASS, their suggested strategies and their expectations in the future workshops or training programmes on continuous assessment.

1.6.2.2 Qualitative data collection

Interviews were conducted with the school management team members (school principals, deputy principals, and heads of departments. The instrument aimed at determining the perceptions of school managers of CASS and their role in dealing with problems of CASS. A tape recorder was used to capture the responses from the subjects and the tapes were later transcribed before being analysed.

1.6.3 DATA ANALYSIS

1.6.3.1 Quantitative data analysis

To examine the role of school managers in addressing challenges associated with the implementation of continuous assessment, descriptive statistics (Weighted mean, bar graphs, frequency tables and cross-tabulation) were mainly used in the data analysis. The frequency tables and charts were only used to illustrate the overall responses of educators and SMT members. Section D of the questionnaires consisted of three open-ended questions. The responses from these questions were first quantified. I read through the verbatim responses

before developing code categories. After the categorisation of data, I counted the frequency of categories and used frequency tables to illustrate it.

1.6.4 Qualitative data analysis

All data collected were first transcribed. Once the data had been sorted and typed, I read and reread the text to try and understand the data. Once the data were typed and sorted, a hard copy was printed as the data were saved in a computer as a Microsoft Words document. Inductive coding was used in this study. I divided the data into topics or categories in order to easily work with them. I organised and combined related codes into themes or categories. After the categories had been established and data labeled, the data were grouped into categories through the process of cutting and sorting.

1.7 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

In spite of the fact that the CASS policy is the national policy which is implemented in all South African schools, this study was limited to secondary schools in Mopani District, Limpopo Province. Mopani District consists of 24 circuits and the study specifically focused on six circuits: Motupa, Tzaneen, Modjadji, Rakwadu, Nkowankowa, and Sekgosese East. The study of educators and school managers in these circuits will ultimately cast more light on the challenges encountered by both educators and school managers on the CASS policy and their roles of school managers in addressing challenges associated with the implementation process.

1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Since only information-rich respondents were purposively sampled, not all possible respondents had an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study, implying that the sample had been compromised. This further implies that the results of this study may not be generalised to a broader population of educators and school managers in Mopani District. In addition, the return of questionnaires by the educators and school managers was poor. For example, 150 out of 192 questionnaires were returned. This is another delimiter in this study. The other shortcoming in

this study is that of the 24 interview schedules with the school managers in the six circuits only thirteen were honoured, and this has had a limiting effect on the sample of the study.

1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS/CONCEPTS

Neuman (1997:40) notes that everyday culture is filled with concepts, but many of them are vague and full of definitions. Thus, it is imperative to clarify concepts in the study as they may have different meanings for different people, and as a result, may lose their connotative meaning. The concepts clarified below are crucial to an understanding of the discourse in this study.

Continuous Assessment: It is an on-going process of gathering and interpreting information about student learning that is used in making decisions about what to teach and how well students have learned. CASS can also be defined as a classroom strategy administered by teachers to ascertain the knowledge, understanding and skills attained by learners using well planned activities/tasks that are undertaken on a continuous basis (throughout the year), using various kinds of assessment forms, methods and instruments or tools (Nitko as cited in Adebowale & Alao, 2008:4). This is an assessment model used to determine a learner's achievement during the course of a grade or level, provide information that is used to support a learner's development and enable improvements to be made in the learning and teaching process (DoE, 2005: 27). In this study, CASS implies an on-going process of making judgments about learners' progress using various kinds of tasks, methods and tools.

Moderation: The word refers to a process of verifying results of school-based assessment and the external assessment (DoE, 2005:27). It refers to the process which ensures that assessment of the outcomes described in the National Curriculum Statement (General) are fair, valid and reliable (LDoE, 2008:17). In this study, moderation is the process of quality control involving monitoring and approval assessment procedures and judgment to ensure that school assessment of the outcomes described in the NCS (general) for every subject or learning area offered at school level are fair, valid and reliable.

Further Education and Training (FET): This is the beginning of specialised learning. It is in this band that learners prepare for higher education or the workplace (DoE, 2005:42). In this study,

Further Education and Training is a band or phase in the South African education system which covers three grades, namely, grades 10 - 12 in schools and equivalent levels in colleges, previously known as technical colleges. It is located between the General Education and Training (GET) Band and the Higher Education and Training Band (HET) or world of work.

National Curriculum Statement: The NCS represents a policy statement for learning and teaching in schools located in Further Education and Training Band. The NCS gives expression to what South Africans regard as worthwhile knowledge, skills and values, and is informed by the Constitution of the Republic.

School managers: Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements (Cuban, 1988: xx). In this study, school managers refer to professional persons (Principals, deputy principals and School HoD's) who maintain schools' arrangements by performing intertwined activities which involve planning, organizing, leading, and control of the people and resources to attain school's objectives and create a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of different policies of the Department of Education within the school context.

School leadership: Leadership is the moving of men towards goals through organisation and it can be done well, badly, or indifferently (Hodgkinson, 1996:30). Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, actions of others (Cuban, 1988: xx). School leadership in this study would therefore mean the process whereby teachers, learners and parents are influenced by school managers towards goal setting and goal attainment using the force of their personalities and skills to change the attitudes and actions of teachers, learners and parents rather than coercion.

Implementation: Implementation is the realization of an application, or execution of a plan, idea, model, design, specification, standard, algorithm, or policy (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2010: Online). In this study, implementation is the art of putting into practice the official policy at school level.

Mopani District: One of the six educational districts in Limpopo Province (See Appendix A)

1.10 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

It is envisaged that the findings and recommendations from this study may be useful to policy makers in the department, educators as implementers of the CASS policy, and to the school managers as school-based monitors and supporters of educators in the implementation process within the school context. Furthermore, the findings may be useful to curriculum advisors and subject specialists who are involved in curriculum advisory services and moderation of CASS in the cluster circuits and districts. Considering the fact that all educators and school managers in the South African schooling system implement CASS in their daily teaching practices, the findings and recommendations in this study may be relevant for their advanced knowledge and their further research projects. As part of this study, the researcher provided, *inter alia*, various management roles that are significant when dealing with the challenges facing CASS implementation in the FET band of the schools. Finally, the recommendations in this study will provide different context-free intervention strategies which can be useful for effective redress of the chaotic state of CASS in schools and redeem schools which are already in a quandary, not knowing which turn-around strategies to use in addressing the challenges facing their educators.

1.11 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In formulating a theoretical perspective for studying “The role of school managers in the implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training band” this study drew liberally from both quantitative (deductive) and qualitative (inductive) theories.

1.11.1 Qualitative theory

The critical social theory and postmodern social theory perspectives were used as qualitative theories in this study. To the critical theorist, liberation or emancipation means freeing oneself from the accepted ideology of current social conventions, beliefs, and modes of operation (Hunkins and Ornstein, 2004:187). According to Maree (2007:62), critical theorists claim to disclose the needs and struggles of the people regardless of whether or not the people are conscious of them. This study views the oppressive nature of the CASS system as being caused by the fact that different challenges emerging from previous studies (e.g. overcrowding, lack of training, inadequate supply of resources, learners’ disciplinary problems, and educators’

workload) were not addressed, yet educators and school managers are expected to continue implementing the policy.

In this study, the emancipation of educators and school managers from their struggles and challenges will come through the critical analysis of the discourse in schools. The critical analysis in this study also aims to bring to light the restricting and alienating conditions of the status quo. This study advocates that the emancipatory function of knowledge is irrefutable, and must therefore, be accepted as a critical instrument to make school managers shape their perceptions of the CASS policy as they engage in the “traditional management” roles that help to create favourable atmosphere for the implementation of CASS.

According to postmodernism, the emancipatory knowledge is constantly changing as each individual or group gives a particular interpretation to it, reflecting distinctive needs and experiences (Maree, 2007:64). This study seeks not to uncover pre-existing realities relating to CASS in Mopani District, but is rather involved in the interactive process of knowledge creation that informs the development of action by pure proliferation, juxtaposition and disjunction. For the successful implementation of CASS to be realised in schools, school managers need to engage in continual deconstruction of the curriculum world, engaging in a manner of thinking that refuses to accept existence of any grand narrative relating to the new assessment policy. By impugning the legitimacy of a grand master narrative, the school managers will “continually reweaving the threads – a garment being woven, constructed, and “dewoven,” deconstructed, and rewoven, and reconstructed” (Hunkins and Ornstein, 2004:189). The study, embracing the influence of the postmodernism, postulates that the CASS policy is a “garment” that still needs to be woven, constructed, dewoven, deconstructed, rewoven, and reconstructed.”

1.11.2 Quantitative theory

The theoretical perspective used for studying the role of school managers in the implementation of CASS through the use of quantitative approach is based on the post-positivism worldview. The major assumptions of post-positivism are (a) knowledge is conjectural (and anti-foundational), (b) research is a process of making claims and then refining or abandoning some

of them for other more strongly warranted, (c) data, evidence, and rational considerations shape knowledge, (d) research seeks to develop relevant, true statements, ones that can serve to explain the situation of concern or that describe the casual relationships of interest (Phillips and Burbules as cited in Creswell, 2009:7).

In this study, the quantitative theory was stated as a series of if-then logic statements that explain why I would expect the independent variable to influence or cause dependent variables (Creswell, 2009:53). The following statements represent the underlying logic for conducting this study through using the quantitative research design:

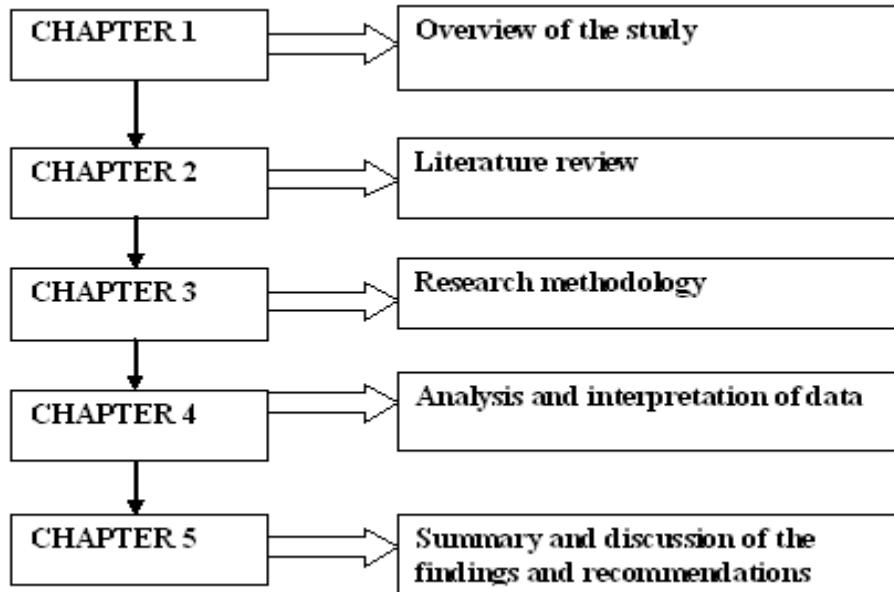
1. If the frequency of engagement in the “traditional” leadership and management roles such as monitoring and support, management of parent involvement, and learners management by school managers increases (a) the knowledge of educators in as far as CASS is concerned will increase, (b) the degree of CASS implementation by educators will increase, and (c) the attitude of educators towards CASS will be positive.
2. If the training of school managers is intensified (a) their knowledge of CASS will increase, (b) the frequency of performing management functions will increase, and (c) their attitude towards the CASS policy and their new roles in the implementation process will change to positive.

The study does not provide detailed recommendations for management roles suitable to an individual school context; however, it sets out to provide a coherent conceptual framework and understanding of the dynamics of creativity within educational management and leadership in schools in Mopani District.

1.12 PLAN OF THE STUDY

This study is divided into five chapters. The graphical illustration of the chapter plan in this study is given in figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Plan of the study (summary of chapter 1 – 5)



1.13 SUMMARY

In this, an introductory overview, the background, problem statement and aims of the investigation were presented. The research methodology was also outlined and the key concepts used in this study were clarified. In the next chapter, the literature review underpinning this study will be discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the clarification of important concepts relating to continuous assessment. The chapter is divided into two major parts. The first part examines the theory and practice of CASS which shall include inter alia the following aspects: the historical background of CASS, the implications of CASS in South Africa, CASS models, advantages and purposes of CASS, and emerging trend and challenges in the CASS. This first part provides the basis for the next part that addresses issues relating to what this study refers to as the “traditional” leadership and management roles of the school managers. These roles are termed “traditional” roles because they are roles consciously or unconsciously performed by school managers on daily basis. The literature review is also aimed at identifying the training needs of school managers.

A literature review illuminates the related literature to enable a reader to gain further insights from the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:72). The purpose of literature review is to share with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the one being undertaken. It relates a study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in the literature, filling in gaps and extending prior studies. It provides a framework for stating the importance of the study as well as giving a benchmark for comparing the results with other findings (Creswell, 2009:25). The knowledge gained from the literature review aids in stating the significance of the problem, developing the research design, and relating the results of the study to prior knowledge (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:75-76). The two parts of literature review will illuminate the reader’s mind as well as enhancing his or her insights into the continuous component of outcomes-based assessment.

PART ONE

2.2 THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

Although this study does not deal with the nitty-gritty of outcomes-based assessment, it is imperative that I should focus this section on briefly outlining the background of CASS. The following salient facets of CASS are discussed in this section:

2.2.1 Definition of CASS in the National Curriculum Statement

According to Kapambwe and Mulenga (2008:2), CASS is an on-going diagnostic and school-based process that uses a variety of assessment tools to measure learner performance. Nwana elucidates that CASS is the mechanism that guides classroom teaching, motivates learners, improve mastery and guides progress from one class to the next (Nwana as cited by Ubong & Wokocha, 2009:42). This is further espoused by the Western Cape Department of Education's view on CASS. It defines CASS as a process of "gathering valid and reliable information about the performance of the learner on an ongoing basis, against clearly defined criteria, using a variety of methods, tools, techniques and contexts, recording the findings, and reflecting and reporting by giving positive, supportive and motivational feedback to learners, other educational institutions, and parents" (WCDoE, 2002:2).

Several salient principles emerge from the definition provided by the Western Cape Department of Education, which I found imperative in this study to discuss further. Firstly, is the principle of **credibility**: CASS is credible when it embraces the principles of validity and reliability. This could easily be represented with a mathematical equation: $\text{validity} + \text{reliability} = \text{credibility}$. **Validity**: Validity is one of the traditional touchstones of assessment practice (Beets & Le Grange, 2005:115). This is the assurance that the skills and knowledge that are considered important are assessed. In a nutshell, the evidence of CASS is valid when it fits the purpose by focusing on the requirements laid down in the learning outcomes and associated assessment standards. **Reliability**: A reliable assessment is one that is in line with other assessments made by the same and other assessors (educators) in relation to the assessment standards

Second, is the principle of “**criteria-referenced assessment**” In South Africa, the introduction of CASS facilitated a shift from the norm-referenced assessment to criteria-referenced assessment. In norm-referenced assessment, educators assess and report on learner’s achievement and progress in comparison to other learners, while in criteria-referenced assessment; educators assess and report on a learner’s achievement and progress in comparison to predetermined criteria. The underpinning principle of norm referenced assessment is that learners’ results are not only based on their performance, but are also dependent on how well other learners in a class perform (Brook, 2002:46). Competition is a central feature in norm-referenced assessment. According to Brooks, competition can discourage learners from assisting one another, and encourage learners to cover up misunderstandings, threaten peer relationships, tend to divide groups into higher and lower achievers and discourage intrinsic motivation (Brooks, 2002:47).

2.2.2 Historical and philosophical background of CASS

To better understand the theory and practice of CASS, history and philosophy are valuable aspects of this study. Through this study, I have attempted to establish how the theory and practice of CASS evolved with reference to international and local history. The study further highlights the philosophical background of CASS which is aimed at informing readers about the system of beliefs that guided the introduction of CASS in South Africa.

2.2.2.1 Historical background of CASS

After The World Declaration on Education For All (EFA) in Jomtien (1990) and Dakar (2000), changes in assessment theories and practices became commonplace in many global education systems. Not only did the conferences give fresh impetus to issues relating to assessment; they also necessitated the introduction of a new form of assessment that will determine that children are acquiring the useful knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. EFA introduced four major areas of assessment, namely, public examination, national assessment, international assessment and Classroom assessment (Continuous Assessment). According to the Human Science Research Council (2008:15), there are at least 33% of Sub-Saharan African countries, 55% Arab States,

33% Central Asia, 64% East Asia/Pacific, 44% South/West Asia, 59% Latin America Caribbean, 77% N. America/W. Europe, 65% Central Eastern Europe countries that carried out national assessment between 1995 – 99 and 2000 – 06. This national assessment provided a sound basis for policy and decision making in education in as far as CASS is concerned.

Although classroom assessment has attracted the least attention in the EFA proposals to improve the quality of education, it can be argued that it has a greater impact on the learning of children than any other form of assessment. In the last decade, there has been a growing recognition of the value of assessment in improving the quality of education, in particular the use of CASS for improving the teaching and learning process (HSRC, 2008:18). This recognition of the value of CASS has resulted in a significant increase in the number of countries developing policies and systems for conducting CASS. Previous studies on the subject have revealed that in the international scenarios, formative assessment had already been practised in schools in various western countries including Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, Italy, New Zealand, and Scotland (OECD as quoted by Adebawale & Alao, 2008:2). Ubong and Wokocha (2009: 43) point out that CASS in the United States of America is determined on a local rather than on a national basis. They further record that the issues of education in the USA had to revolve around school districts and even in the districts; there could be variations on the basis of locality.

It is also appears to be true that several examination systems in Africa have introduced an element of CASS in their public examinations. To support this, the HSRC (2008:19) found that in a number of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries, the final grades on the national examinations comprise scores from CASS exercises as well as the examination paper. In Nigeria, for example, CASS as an instructional process began in 1977, and it constitutes 60% of the final assessment scores while the final examination at the end of the programme is only 40% in Junior Secondary Schools. In Zambia, the preparatory work for the implementation of the CASS began in earnestly in November 2004, while the implementation in the pilot schools commenced in January 2006. In Zambia, the CASS final mark is the average mark calculated from grades five, six and seven. The CASS final mark and the grade seven final examination marks are used for selection for admission to grade eight (Adebawale & Alao, 2008:4). The CASS mark constitutes 50% of the final assessment scores.

In Tanzania, the examination and CASS score comprise 50% of the final grade (HSRC, 2008:19). In Swaziland, CASS was introduced in 1993 by the Ministry of Education (MoE). In Kenya the implementation of CASS as part of the national certification was put on hold as educators abused the system. In reviewing the implementation of CASS in Ghana, the West African Examinations Board found significant differences between CASS scores assigned by educators and examination scores of learners. In both Namibia and Malawi the introduction of CASS started at primary level.

In South Africa, assessment practices and systems played a crucial role in maintaining oppressive apartheid policies (HSRC, 2008:24). Major government initiatives to reform assessment started in 1998 with the promulgation of the first national assessment policy and conducted systemic evaluations (national assessments conducted at grade 3 in 2001 and 2007 and grade 6 in 2004 (HSRC, 2008:25). The main objective was to assess the effectiveness of the entire system and the extent to which the vision and goals of education system are being achieved. This reform was followed by other positive initiatives such as the introduction of Continuous Task of Assessment (CTA's) for grade 9 in 2002, Assessment Exemplars for educators in 2005, and change in grades 10 – 12 school-based assessment. The 1998 National Assessment Policy was revised in 2007. In South Africa, CASS has been incrementally introduced into the schooling system – three (3) provinces in 1999, and additional four (4) in 2000 on a trial basis. In 2001 the CASS system was introduced in the Further Education and Training Band (Grades 10 – 12) underpinned by the following key principle(s): In all subjects but Life Orientation, assessment which is done during the school year will make up 25% of the total mark, and the end of the year examination will make up the remaining 75%. In grade 12, the final mark will be made up of 75% of the external examination. In grades 10 and 11 the final mark will consist of the mark as will be decided by the provincial/national department from time to time and communicated to all levels of the department. In Life Orientation, the internal assessment counts 100% of the final assessment mark (DoE, 2008: 7).

2.2.2.2 Philosophical background of CASS

The Subject Assessment Guidelines for Physical Sciences outlines the country's philosophy of CASS as follows: CASS (a) develops learners' knowledge, skills and values, (b) assesses learners' strengths and weaknesses, (c) provides additional support to learners, (d) helps educators and learners to revisit or revise certain sections of the curriculum and (e) motivates and encourages learners (DoE, 2008:1).

Items above indicate in essence that the philosophy of CASS presents CASS as the national instrument or mechanism used to advance the principles of outcomes-based education. It is also important to state that the philosophy of CASS in South Africa revolves around learner development. This is why almost all objectives emphasise the development of learners' knowledge, skills and understanding, support and motivate learners, and identify their weaknesses in order to address them during the teaching and learning process.

It is evident, in my view, that the pitfalls or successes of the implementation of CASS depend on the extent to which the implementation force has understood the country's philosophy on the new policy. If the implementers fail to embrace and cherish the philosophy, the system will definitely collapse. However, if the implementers embody the philosophy the system will be durable. To elaborate on this argument, I feel that one issue that the country has ignored over the years is one that involved impregnating school managers with the country's philosophy in order to view the teleology of CASS from a societal perspective rather from an individual perspective. I therefore believe that every policy's philosophy moulds perceptions and establish firm framework for implementation.

2.2.3 The implications for introducing CASS in South Africa

In view of the foregoing facts and in order to advance the goal of CASS in Mopani District, Limpopo Province, the following suggestions are importance:

Support and Guidance for managers: This is crucial since the introduction of the CASS policy implies a shift from a traditional role of school managers to a new role that goes beyond being an

assessor. The new managers' role requires that they possess knowledge and understanding of different facets of assessment in order to effectively manage assessment at schools. The managers' support system should include regular workshops and seminars which the department should organise to advance the knowledge and understanding of CASS policies and programmes. Managers in this context will include the school principal, deputy principals and heads of departments. According to the International Association for Education Assessment (IAEA) paper, these are individuals who are responsible for the development of guidelines, circulars, the drafting of implementation plans, the setting up of processes and procedures, the making of resources, and training (IAEA, 2006:9).

This paper adds that as a first step, all managers should be provided with intensive management training relating specifically to the management of assessment. It furthermore states that unless there is a "buy in" and support from managers at strategic levels, policy innovation is not guaranteed. It suggests that the training of managers be twofold, i.e. training in the contents of the policy and training relating to the management of the policy. The truth about this statement is that the quality of any policy cannot exceed the quality of the implementers and managers of the policy.

Monitoring and supervision of the implementation of CASS policy: The introduction of the CASS policy implies that there must be strict monitoring and supervision at school level. According to Adebawale and Alao (2008:13), monitoring and supervision of the implementation of such policies should be stepped up and reinserted into the research policy, formulation policy, and implementation evaluation cycle. Adebawale and Alao further suggest that it should not be done in the usual "scapegoat finding" mode, but in the performance support and enhancement type.

With regard to performance support, school managers should view monitoring as a method to identify deficiencies in the educators' classroom practices in order to appraise them, and not to condemn them. For monitoring and supervision to serve its main purpose, school managers must give educators feedback of their observations. To accentuate this argument, Guidelines on the Implementation of CASS document states that in order to ensure a degree of control and to

promote authenticity of the CASS mark, a component of the CASS should be administered in a controlled environment (LDoE, 2008:7-8). I am of the opinion that the principle of moderation will ensure that CASS is administered in a controlled manner by the educators. Moderation will ensure that Learning Outcomes (LOs) and Assessment Standards (ASs) in each task are appropriate and well addressed in order to ensure that the basic requirements of CASS are met by the educators.

2.2.4 The purposes and advantages of CASS

The merit of CASS is that it promotes frequent interaction between learners and educators and enables educators to know the strengths and weaknesses of learners to identify which learners need review and remediation (Nikto as cited in Adebowale & Alao, 2008:4). The educator-learner interactions are essential for learning since they provide an expanded opportunity for remedial programme (when learners experience learning problems). Nitko further notes that learners receive feedback from educators based on performance that allows them to focus on topics they have not yet mastered. My concern in this regard is that it seems in most of schools that it takes the summative assessment (examination) to detect that learners had problems in certain areas of their learning which defeats the purpose of CASS.

It could further be argued in this regard that since CASS takes place during the learning process, it is vital in making decisions on how learners and educators proceed with the learning and teaching process. It allows both the educators and learners to identify learning problems and other factors that influence learning and then make the necessary adjustments before moving forward rather than to wait until these shortcomings are revealed in the summative assessment. In the same vein of argument, the Department of Education captures the essence of CASS and states that CASS through informal daily assessment and the formal programme of assessment is used to (1) develop learners' knowledge, skills and values, (2) assess learners' strength and weaknesses, (3) provide additional support to learners, (4) revisit and revise certain sections of the curriculum and (5) motivate and encourage learners (DoE, 2008:1).

According to Quansah (2005:4), CASS improves the validity and reliability of the results of

learners' performance on tests and exercises. Quansah adds that CASS helps the learners to develop effective learning and work habits. In this regard, my own argument in support of Quansah's view of CASS is that CASS expands the scope of assessment to include not only formal written work but also tasks such as investigation, practical activities, research projects, and interviews. As a result of this, learners develop independent and critical thinking patterns, skills of effective communication and learn to work collaboratively with peers and strongly defined work ethics in order to complete tasks such as investigation, research projects, and interviews.

On the issue of developing learners' critical thinking and peer collaboration, Greaney and Kellaghan (2003:46), point out that the advantages of CASS are that (1) it does not deconceptualise knowledge and skills, (2) it provides evidence of learners learning in authentic settings, (3) it allows an assessment of (learners' ability to think critically, to co-operate, to solve problems, to communicate, and it can contribute substantially to advancing learners' learning and understanding. Greaney and Kellaghan (2003:46) add that CASS plays a role in determining the learner's current level of knowledge, skills and understanding, to diagnose problems they may be encountering, to make decision about the next instructional steps to take (to revise or move on), and to evaluate the learning that has taken place in a lesson.

Alausa (2003:2) ascribes one advantage of CASS to the fact that it places educators at the centre of all performance-assessment activities and that it encourages more educator participation in the overall assessment or grading of learners. I believe that with the educator placed at the centre of assessment activities, he or she is able to communicate with the learner before, during and after the assessment activity, especially by giving constructive advice on where and how to improve performance. However, these purposes cannot be realised accidentally without any special efforts on the side of the school managers, educators and learners. Quansah (2005:5-6) provides ways to achieve the purposes of CASS of which this study has adopted a few and suggests that they be applied wherever necessary:

Longer time for collecting assessment information: To obtain accurate and reliable assessment data on a pupil, the assessments could be spread over a longer period of time, allowing the

learners to take tests and other assignments at different times throughout the course.

Inclusion of more complex thinking skills in the testing programme: High level thinking skills involving analytical thinking and problem solving skills and other competencies that require extended time for learning and for test response can then be added to the CASS programme.

Educator assistance and remediation: A further purpose of the CASS process is to foster cooperation between the learners and the educator especially in the area of learners' class projects. The process requires the educator to provide assistance in the form of advice on various aspects of the learners' projects. The learner learns to consult the educator, classmates and other sources on aspects of project work, while maintaining position as the leader in the project undertaking. Besides offering assistance as needed, the educator should be able to offer remedial help by using learners' common mistakes and misunderstandings for further improvement in class learning (Quansah, 2005:5-6).

2.2.5 CASS Models

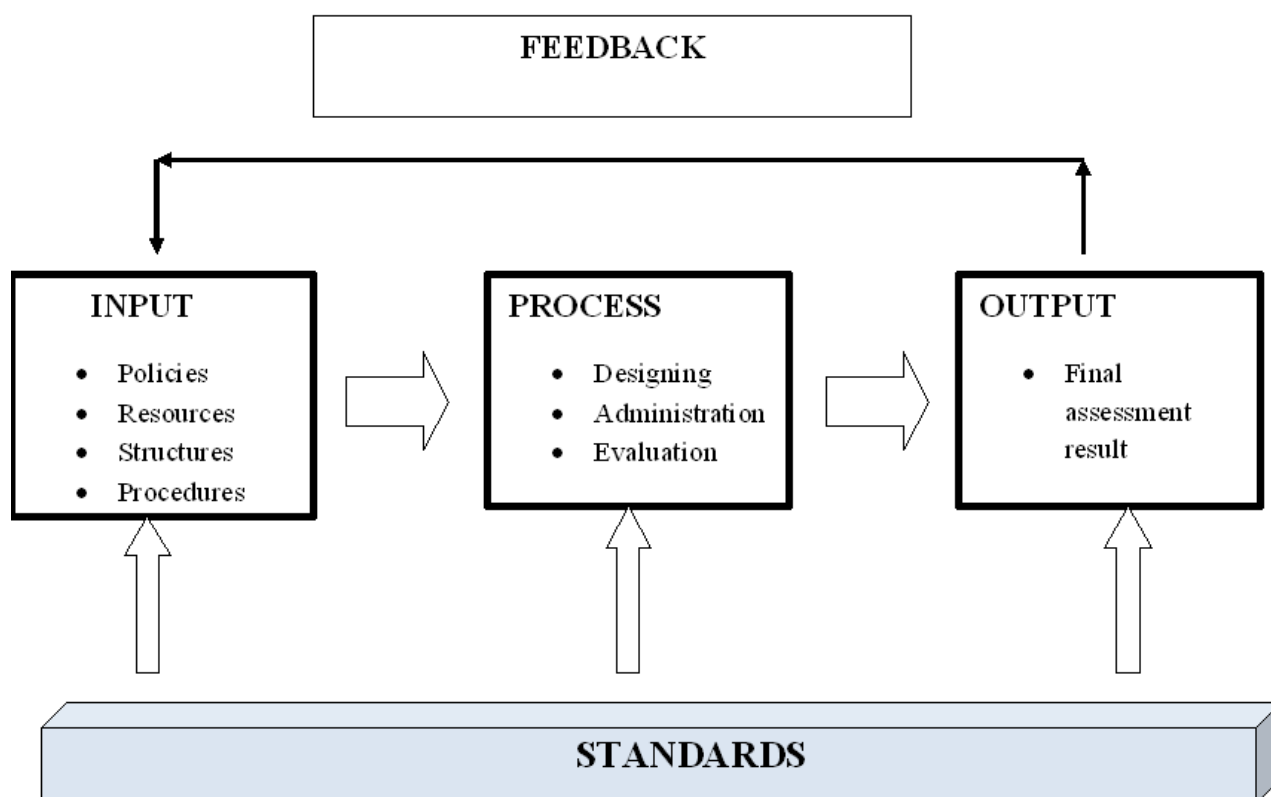
For the purpose of this study, two models are proposed of which one is aimed at quality assurance while the other is the accountability model. These models are suggested to assist school managers to deal with the dire threats to the implementation of CASS. These models are the IPO (Input, Process, and Output) model and the Continuous Assessment Accountability (CAA) model.

2.2.5.1 IPO Model of CASS

The establishment of clearly defined standards is a point of departure for this model. These standards must be communicated, accepted and understood by all participants in the assessment process. The model suggests that when standards are defined, support, training and guidance to the implementers of assessment are necessary in order for the system to yield credible final results. According to the IPO model, there is a causal link between the inputs, processes and outputs. This means that the variables at input level have a direct influence on the variables at

process level, which in turn influence the variables at output level (IAEA, 2006:6). Figure 2.1 is the diagrammatical representation of the IPO model:

Figure 2.1: IPO Model



(Adapted from IAEA, 2006:7).

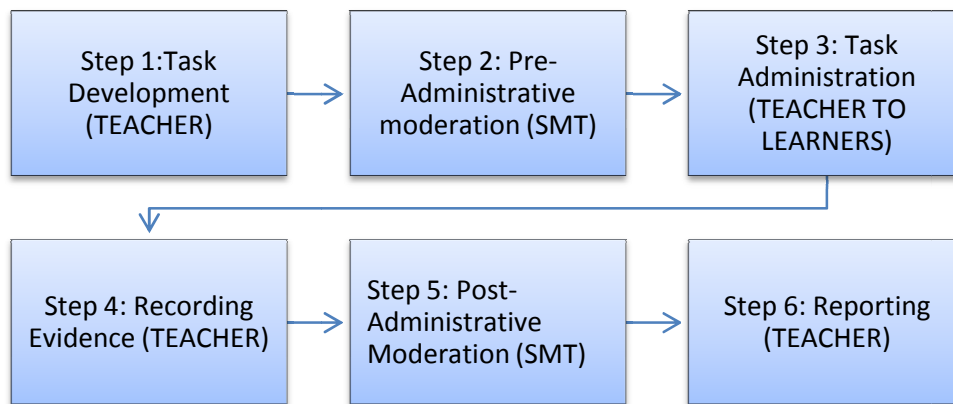
Curriculum standards are contained in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and they are articulated as learning outcomes, assessment standards and the prescribed content (IAEA, 2006:8). Learning Programme Guidelines (LPG) also articulate the prescribed context for each subject, and assists educators to plan for sequenced learning, teaching and assessment in Grades 10 to 12 so that all learning outcomes in a subject are achieved in a progressive manner. The following three phases of planning are recommended: Phase 1 – develop a Subject Framework for grades 10 to 12, Phase 2 – develop a Work Schedule for each grade, and Phase 3 – develop Lesson Plans (DoE, 2008:3,7). The LPG further embodies the learning outcomes which come with a set of associated assessment standards within a subject. Learning outcomes prescribe what

the learner must achieve while assessment standards indicate what the learner must know, do or demonstrate in order to be declared competent.

For the purpose of this study, input level includes elements which mainly relate to legislative framework, circulars developed for assessment and moderation, human resources, implementation plans, educators development programmes, monitoring, recording and reporting systems, and evaluation and review processes. The “input” level demands efforts from all managers at different levels to engage robustly with different Acts, policies and guidelines. The legislative framework is important to guide the developments of documents aimed at guiding the implementation process. The legislative framework may include inter alia, the following: National Educational Policy Act (Act No. 27 of 1996), The National Senior Certificate: A qualification in Level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), The National Curriculum Statement Grade 10-12 (2004), The National Protocol on Recording and Reporting, Norms and Standards for educators, Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAGs), The National Protocol on Assessment for school in the General and Further Education and Training Band (Grades R – 12), 2005, and other relevant prescripts.

The assessment process will cover aspects relating to the implementation of the assessment process and these include the following: designing the assessment instrument, internal moderation of assessment instrument, administration of the assessment instruments, evaluating the assessment evidence and recording and reporting of the assessment outcomes (IAEA, 2006:7). This assessment process advocates the interaction between the educator and school managers. Educators are responsible for selecting, modifying and developing tasks which, upon completion send them to the school manager for school-based moderation. After moderation, the educator will then administer the task to the learners. After administering the task, evidence is recorded in the form of marks and then the educator submits a sample of the learners’ evidence of performance back to the school manager together with mark sheets for post-administrative moderation. After the post-administrative moderation, the educator collates the evidence for reporting purposes. It is important in this study to represent this interaction between the educator and school manager with regard to the assessment process in figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 Level 2 – The Assessment Process



Level two of this model presents two aspects which are of vital importance. These aspects are moderation and recording and reporting which this study values as keys to the process of CASS implementation.

a) Moderation

This study, therefore, defines moderation simply as the process of verifying that the requirements of CASS are met by the educator. Espousing on the claim, Department of Education spells out that moderation is the process which ensures that assessment of the outcomes described in the National Curriculum Statement (General) are fair, valid and reliable (DoE, 2008:17).

There are three important levels of moderation, namely, school level moderation, cluster/district level moderation and provincial moderation. School level moderation is done by the school management team (SMT) or subject heads, district level moderation is done by subject specialists or curriculum advisors and provincial moderation is done by the panel of subject specialists. This study views school-level moderation as very important since the intensive internal moderation by school managers will ensure that educators are supported throughout the process. School-level moderation usually consists of pre-administration (before the task is administered), and post-administration (after the task has been administered). In pre-administration moderation, the SMT uses a moderation tool to check the quality of the assessment task submitted by the educator, while in the post-administration moderation, the SMT draws samples of 10% of the total number of learners' evidence of performance and complete

the moderation tool designed for this purpose. The term moderation report should be completed and submitted by the principal to the district on term to term basis (DoE, 2008:20).

b) Recording and Reporting

These twin concepts are used to legitimise evidence of learner performance gathered during an on-going process of assessment. They are intertwined, and to some extent, inseparable. This is for the mere reason that in CASS educators do not only document evidence of learners' performance (recording) but must also communicate the evidence with the learners and other stakeholders with an interest in the country's education (reporting). Supporting this statement, The National Protocol on Assessment in the General and Further Education and Training Band (Grades 10 – 12) defines recording as the process in which the educator documents the level of learners' performance (DoE, 2005:7). In this regard, the documentation of learner performance should indicate learner progress towards the achievement of the learning outcomes prescribed in the National Curriculum Statement and provide the learner's conceptual progression within a grade and readiness to progress to the next grade. According to the National Protocol on the Assessment Policy, records of learner performance should also be used to verify the progress made by the educators and learners in the teaching and learning process (DoE, 2005:7).

When a learner's performance is recorded, the learner's performance must be communicated. DoE (2005:7) defines reporting as the process of communicating learner performance to learners, parents, schools, and other stakeholders such as employers, and tertiary institutions. Learner performance can be reported in a number of ways. This includes report cards, parents' meetings, school visitation days, parent-educator conferences, phone calls, letters, and class or school newsletters. It is worth mentioning in this juncture that as much as educators assess on an on-going basis, educators must also record and report on an on-going basis.

Going back to the third level of the IPO model, the outcome relates to the final assessment result that emanates from the assessment process (IAEA, 2006:8). This paper adds that the assessment result must be reliable, valid and enjoy public confidence. In a nutshell, the model infers that the implementation of CASS requires that support and guidance be given to all persons engaged in

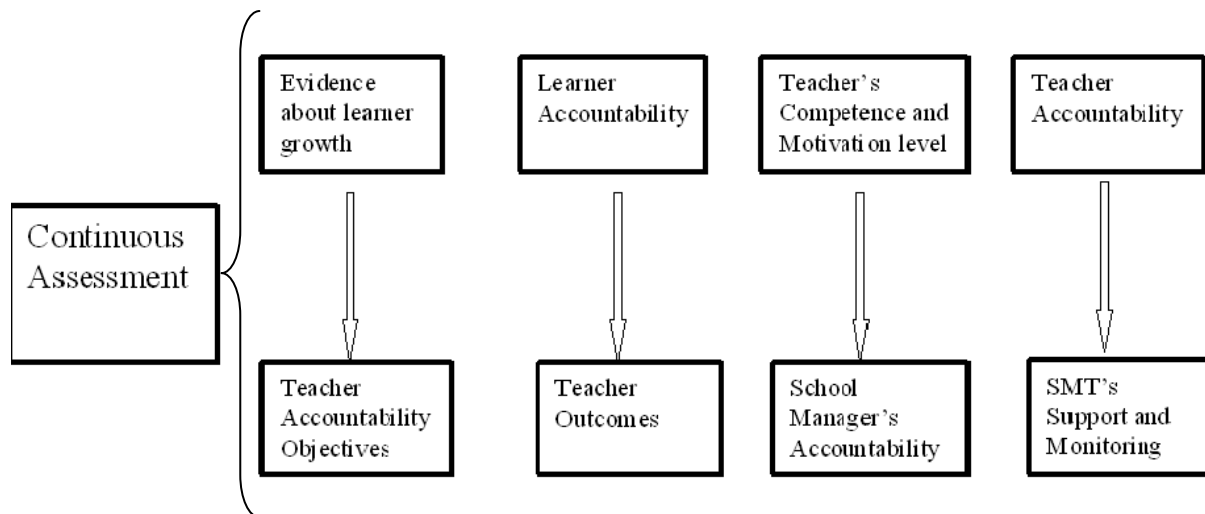
the implementation of the model at various levels in the system. It is imperative, therefore, to note in this study that the implementation of this model requires commitment from both the school managers and educators in order to realise the expected outcomes.

2.2.5.2 Continuous Assessment Accountability (CAA) model

This model infers that school managers, educators and learners are made accountable for achieving the goals of instruction and assessment. The educator is made accountable for the cognitive development of the students (learners) and their achievement. At the same time, the student (learner) is made accountable to the educator with regard to the learning objectives established for the class (Ehiametalor, downloaded from <http://www.unilorin.edu.ng/>). This presents the only two levels of accountability. But in order to focus the study towards answering the research question I have added the third level to the model. In my own view the third level espouses that as much as educators and learners are accountable for the achievement of instructional and assessment outcomes, educators themselves are again accountable to the school managers who in turn are accountable to them. The school managers are accountable for educators' competence and motivation levels. At the same time, the educators are accountable to school managers with regard to monitoring and support programmes they design for them.

Based on the third level of the model, I argue that the school manager's role is to design programmes to support educators with respect to their assessment abilities and further monitor how they practise the CASS system. The school manager's other role is to motivate educators in order to have them channel their energies towards the success of this mode of assessment. The educator must be accountable for what he has been trained to do by the school manager by applying principles laid down by the school manager. When the educator knows that his or her monitoring will be based on principles and concepts established in an in-service training or school-based curriculum support workshops, he or she is more likely to cooperate and freely apply assessment principles without being coerced. The Continuous Assessment Accountability (CAA) model can easily be illustrated by figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: The Continuous Assessment Accountability (CAA) Model



(Adapted from Ehiamezor downloaded from <http://www.unilorin.edu.ng/>)

It is important to note that for CASS to succeed in schools, educators should be accountable to their learners, learners to their educators, educators to their managers, and managers to their educators. In this model, accountability is the key to unlocking human potential and ensuring collaborative effort in the implementation process. This study advocates that if this model is properly communicated at all levels, it could help all three participants to deal with challenges confronting the implementation of CASS in schools.

2.2.6 Emerging trends and challenges in CASS: The South African perspective

Despite its central role in the teaching and learning process, the practice of CASS by educators is observed to be deficient in many ways. The main problem identified as working against the implementation of CASS in South Africa is “inadequate level of educator preparedness” for the implementation of CASS (IAEA, 2006:4). To support these findings, Alausa (2003:3) identifies lack of skills in test construction and test administration, attitudes towards CASS approach and record keeping as some of the problems associated with the educators’ inadequate level of preparedness. These findings necessitated a need for a clinical approach to the training of the educators and school managers that looks at larger issues of CASS in more fresh perspective.

The other problem associated with educators in South Africa is fairly similar to the one observed in Tanzania. This problem is relating to the giving of informal assessment tasks such as homework to the learners. The study found that little homework is given in schools (O-Saki and Agu as quoted by Kellaghan & Greaney, 2003:46). Since homework provides the opportunity for educators to assess learners' proficiency as well as to provide feedback, failure to give more homework means that less feedback is given to learners. Problems of learners' learning may not be identified as a result. There are however, some problems that arise out of extensive assessment tasks. According to Quansah (2005:2-4), some of these problems include:

- High stress in test taking and test marking: The first problem is the large number of assessments learners have to go through, and the larger number of mark recordings educators have to make.
- Reduction in educator/learners contact hours: This is relevant in the South African context as Formal Assessment Programmes for subjects such as Mathematics and Physical Sciences consist of 8 and 7 assessments respectively. Administering these assessment tasks effectively will cause serious erosion in instructional time.
- Lack of remedial instruction based on CASS: Very little remedial instruction based on the results of CASS takes place in schools. This is essentially due to the lack of time arising from the rather large number of assessment tasks and other professional duties and functions that the educator has to execute, and
- Lack of moderation: The SMT is sometimes bombarded with large numbers of assessment tasks to moderate and as a result they just stamp and sign the assessment task. This compromises the quality of the tests and other tasks used in the assessment programme. I therefore, suggest that there should be an accompanying moderation system which strictly checks the authenticity and quality of assessment tasks set by the educator and the reliability of marks awarded by educators.

Another problem is that giving extensive assessment tasks increases the educators' workload. Workload is one of the major problems associated with the implementation of CASS in South

Africa. This is in agreement with the paper submitted to the International Association for Education Assessment (IAEA) annual conference, since it found that the implementation of CASS leads to an increase in both educator and learner workload, namely, extensive record keeping and monitoring of individual learners are required (IAEA, 2006:4). The findings are in agreement with The Educator Workload Report's (2006:18-20) findings compiled by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) since it postulates that the introduction of OBE had resulted in increased workloads for educators. The report provides evidence that educators' workload have grown due to the actual class size, new roles and expectations of educators, the distribution of learning areas per educator, changes in the curriculum, marking and learners' assessment, changes in administrative demands, and a more diverse learner population inside the classroom. In this regard, this study propagates that the educator workload is a major practical problem associated with the implementation of CASS in Mopani District where the learner-educator ratio is staggering.

The report submitted to the Minister of Education, Angie Motshega, by the Task Team for the Review of the implementation of NCS, highlights that planning is a problem that contribute to a high administrative workload (DoE, 2009:26). This is so since educators are required to engage in three-fold planning levels, first constructing the learning programme, secondly, constructing work schedules, and finally, designing lesson plans. Alongside this, educators are required to have a related school assessment plan, an educator assessment plan, an educator portfolio, CASS marks, and mark schedules. All these planning processes increase the administrative workload of educators.

In their paper submitted to the IAEA Conference, Kapambwe and Mulenga identified other challenges which are analogous to the South African situation, particularly in Mopani District, Limpopo Province: larger class sizes, staffing, remediation and enrichment, pupil absenteeism, teaching and learning resources, educator networking, monitoring and feedback (Kapambwe & Mulenga, 2008:6-7). The problem of learner-educator ratio is a critical issue that the department of education in Limpopo Province has failed to address especially in the deep rural circuits in Mopani District. On this issue, it is a common denominator to find 60 and plus learners in classrooms in Mopani District. As a head of department and grade manager in the rurally-based

circuit in Mopani, my grade 10 has 263 learners spread out over four classes which is an average of 66 learners per class. This scenario presents a dilemma facing educators in the district and further articulates how real the workload factor is. I am almost certain that the implementation of CASS is impracticable and almost impossible in crowded classrooms such as these.

Kapambwe and Mulenga also raised the issue of learner absenteeism which I view as one of the most serious problems affecting CASS implementation in Mopani District. In their paper, Kapambwe and Mulenga (2008:7) established that absenteeism also poses an obstacle to the smooth management of CASS records as some pupils' attendance was irregular. These authors add that this was worse in rural areas where some pupils stayed away from school due to the fear of too challenging work. Mopani District, being one of the most largely rural districts in Limpopo Province experiences cases where some learners stay away from school to engage in piece jobs. Learners sometimes stay away from school when it is a calendar day for child grants or other welfare grants. This absenteeism eventually leads to learners dropping out of school.

Another observable problem is the nature of assessment tests which are called "common tests" in Mopani District. Most of these tests are prescribed and set by the cluster circuits or the district. Most often than never, these tests are of a poor quality, sometimes come without marking guidelines or memoranda or when the memoranda are provided, they come with missing answers for some questions or with wrong answers. This is supported by the findings of the Department of Education Task Team on the Review of the Implementation of NCS since it found that Grades 10, 11 and 12 portfolio tasks set by the districts were reported to have many mistakes in the tasks as well as the memos (DoE, 2009:33).

PART TWO

2.3 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ROLES AND POLICY ISSUES IN MOPANI DISTRICT

This study postulates that strengthening school leadership is essential for addressing enormous challenges facing schools in South Africa. Addressing these challenges will, therefore, require school managers who possess the ability to influence educators in their schools. Educator leaders can help other educators to embrace goals, to understand the changes that are needed to strengthen teaching and learning and to work towards improvement (Harris, 2004:13). Grant's view supports Harris's assertion, since she states that educator leadership is required to transform schools into professional learning communities (Grant, 2006:512). In the light of the foregoing, the implementation of CASS has become a crucial educational challenge in the 21st century that calls for school leadership to influence motivations and capacities of educators, hence transforming schools into professional learning communities in which educators freely teach and learners freely learn. This study posits that the transformation of the learning process requires a school leadership team that is prepared to lead from the front and not from the sidelines.

According to Grant (2006:514), "the only way that schools will be able to meet the challenges is to tap the potential of all staff members and allow educators to express a sense of ownership and inclusivity and lead aspects of the change process". Grant's argument presents a cardinal principle that school managers should apply when addressing the implementation challenges facing CASS– that is empowering the teaching staff through participative leadership. According to Harris (2004:13), educator leaders can help other educators to embrace goals, to understand the changes that are needed to strengthen teaching and learning and to work towards improvement.

In citing Crews and Weakley, Normore (2004:2) writes: "Show me a good school and I'll show you a good leader ... when you poke the inner workings of a successful school, you will find – without fail – a skillful leader who understands how to transform educational practice, not just transact educational business". It can be argued from this that good leaders will always produce

good schools. Research and practice confirm that there is a slim chance of creating and sustaining a high-quality learning environment without a skilled and committed leader to help shape teaching and learning (The Wallance Foundation, 2009:1). To support this viewpoint, Kruger and Van Deventer (2003:67) state that effective education cannot be realised without leadership and management. They further indicate that management and leadership work is carried out to enable educators to perform their functional or primary work, namely, teaching. It is arguable that the actualisation of CASS implementation, addressing many challenges hampering the implementation in schools remains the prime responsibility of the school manager.

The study posits that leadership and management form an effective multidimensional approach to dealing with challenges impeding the implementation of CASS in Mopani District. With all this in mind, it can be argued that in order for the implementation of the CASS policy to be successful, strong leadership and effective management must prevail. For the purpose of this study, this section focuses on the following “traditional” leadership and management roles that create a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of CASS in schools:

2.3.1. The instructional leadership as the role of the school manager

Effective instructional leaders are intensely involved in curricular and instructional issues that directly affect student (learner) achievement (Cotton as cited in USA Department of Education, Reading First Notebook, 2005:1). This Notebook further contends that effective school leadership today must combine the traditional school leadership duties such as educator evaluation, budgeting, scheduling, and facilities maintenance with a deep involvement in specific aspects of teaching and learning. The logic of school managers involved in the teaching-learning process is that all policies to be implemented at school place SMT as the fundamental unit of accountability. In this study, I argue that SMT is the organisational unit where all policies are being monitored and managed. Therefore, the current status of CASS in South Africa demands that school managers engage in two major roles, that of a school manager and that of a leader of effective teaching and learning.

To espouse on responsibilities of school managers discussed above, Kruger and Van Deventer (2003:246) maintain the view that the instructional leadership role of the school manager is a multifaceted one which includes three dimensions. The first dimension involves defining the school's mission, which includes framing and communicating the school's aims. The second dimension involves managing the instructional programme, which includes knowing and coordinating the curriculum and instruction, supervising and evaluating instruction and monitoring learner progress. The third dimension involves promoting a positive learning environment by setting standards and expectations, protecting instructional time and promoting improvement.

Drawing from these dimensions, it is important to argue that the instructional leadership role of school managers would lead to an enhancement of quality in the implementation of CASS. This could be so because a clearly defined vision and well framed school aims are crucial for the effectiveness of the instructional programme of the school which includes the assessment programme. Furthermore, curriculum knowledge of the school manager enables him or her to direct, inspire and energise the team. This is supported by Mason (2004:21), who states that an instructional leader provides curricular direction for the team, inspires and energises the team, motivates and mediates educational policy to the team, mentors and supports the team, and monitors the process. Mason further indicates that in providing instructional leadership, the principal and members of the SMT will also do the following:

- Oversee the curriculum planning in the school,
- Help develop OBE learning activities,
- Develop and manage assessment strategies,
- Ensure that the teaching and learning is used effectively,
- Ensure that classroom activities are learner-paced and learner-centred,
- Develop and use team planning techniques, and
- Develop and manage learning resources.

The third dimension provides that the school manager should in addition to overseeing the curriculum in the school, supervise and evaluate instruction. Supervision is an instructional

leadership task of the school manager that relates to functions such as directing schools' curriculum goals, contributing to and supporting schools' purposes and activities, coordinating various interactions within the school, and maintaining instructional programmes and assessing goal achievement. In addition to the supervisory responsibility, the school manager should protect the instructional time by drawing up an efficient timetable. The school timetable is crucial because it ensures that the teaching-learning process proceeds in the most predictable and ideal circumstances. In managing instructional programmes, school managers should give guidance to educators on aspects such as modes of assessment, validity, reliability and objectivity of examinations, marking of papers, administration of internal and external examinations, the relationship and influence of formative and summative assessment on teaching, and recording and reporting evidence of learner performance.

2.3.2. Management of parent involvement as the role of school managers

Since 1994 various groups began to constitute a schools' community and started claiming their stakes in the education of their children. It is on this basis that I argue that the involvement of parents in their children's education is a reformatory initiative to purge the education system of policies that put parents in the backyard.

According to Squelch and Lemmer (1994:93), parent involvement is the participation of parents in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities to improve their children's education. It implies support given to the school which can assume the form of cooperation, participation (which leads to), and partnership. The definition is shedding some light on the new partnership in education in which parents and educators are jointly responsible for the education of learners. Without the cooperation between the parent and the educator, school policies such as the CASS policy will fail, and therefore, the South African child cannot be sufficiently educated.

The benefits of parent involvement include the improvement of the school's performance, a reduced drop-out rate, a decrease in delinquency, and a more positive attitude towards the school (Squelch & Lemmer, 1994:93). Michigan State University online newsletter unfolds that when parents are involved learners obtain higher grades, test scores, graduation rates, better school attendance, increased motivation, better self esteem, lower rates of suspension, decreased use of

drugs and alcohol, and fewer instances of violent behaviour (Michigan State University, 2002: Online from <http://www.michigan.gov/documents>). Since the implementation can be impeded by factors such as learning and behavioural problems, absenteeism, and a high learners' dropout rate, parent involvement can create a climate conducive for the implementation of the policy. Parent involvement, however, do not happen by chance. It calls for an effective school manager to design a programme to manage parent involvement in his or her school. Table 2.1 shows a framework for parent involvement adapted by the Michigan State University from the work of Joyce L. Epstein (retrieved from <http://www.michigan.gov/documents>):

Table 2.1: Framework for Parent Involvement

1. Communicating	Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful. Parents and educators can communicate in the following ways: informal discussion, formal consultation, circulars, parents' evenings, and home visits.
2. Parenting	School managers promote and support parenting skills where families are helped to establish a home environment that will support children as learners. The school managers should encourage parent education and other courses for parents.
3. Learning at home	Parents play an integral role in assisting learners to learn at home. School managers should provide information and ideas to families about how to help learners at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions and planning.
4. Volunteering	Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.
5. Decision making and advocacy	Parents are full partners in the decision making process that affect their children and families.
6. Collaborating with community	Community resources should be tapped in order to support and strengthen schools, families and learner learning.

(Adapted from Michigan State University, 2002)

In conclusion, this study advocates that there should be a positive correlation between the success of the implementation of policies and parent involvement. In short, parent-educator partnership is directly proportional to effective policy implementation. The increase in one variable causes an increase in another. When school and home are connected, the children at school will not miss any of assessment tasks constituting the CASS programme at school. By seeing their parent coming to school regularly, the children will develop a view that school is an integral part of the whole family, hence cooperating with educators as parents (*in loco parentis*).

2.3.3. Management of learners as the role of school managers

The management of healthy and positive discipline remains the duty and responsibility of the school and its partners. It was discussed early on that one of the challenges identified as working against the implementation of CASS which are associated with learners is learner behavioural problems. These behavioural problems disturb a proper execution of duties in schools by school managers and educators. Learner absenteeism, for example, can negatively impact on the smooth implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training Band where there are numerous tasks or activities (formally and informally) to be administered to learners on a daily basis. Espousing on this notion, Western Cape Department of Education states that

“Learner behaviour problems have, for years, been a major concern for educators, administrators and parents. More than ever before, educators are faced with critical problems in their classroom, and are confronted (on a daily basis) with unacceptable learner behaviour and threatening situation”. (WCDoE, 2007:2)

This quote shows how important the management of a healthy and positive discipline is in schools. As a result of the foregoing, this study advocates that discipline is an important element of school and classroom management as it ensures good results and creates an environment where educators and school managers operate without threats or fear of prejudice. Sound discipline does not happen by fate, but requires that the school managers engage robustly with the factors that cause disciplinary problems in their schools. An effective management is, therefore, required on the part of the school to ensure a culture of positive behaviour. This management approach involves firm, co-ordinated and planned actions in the implementation of the general code of conduct for learners and school ethics (WCDoE, 2007:3). This document also

provides that the school manager's duties and responsibilities involve ensuring that all personnel, parents and learners are aware of the policies regarding the positive learner behaviour and ensuring that policy regarding disciplinary measures is implemented. It further provides that school managers must ensure that learner behaviour and learners' issues are discussed regularly.

The maintenance of discipline in schools begins with the adoption of a school code of conduct; this is according to section 8 of the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996). The aim of a schools code of conduct is to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment in which effective teaching and learning can take place. Some of the requirements given in *A practical Guide to understanding and managing learner behaviour within the school context* released by Western Cape Department of Education are that (1) a school code of conduct must be drawn up against the background of the school's ethics and take into consideration the particular character of the school and the values and culture of the learners and community, (2) it must be aimed at creating a disciplined and goal-orientated school environment within which quality education can take place, and it must be dynamic and flexible (WCDoE, 2007:11).

The implementation of CASS requires a healthy and sound environment where the conduct of learners is well regulated through the code of conduct and disciplinary policies. Learners who miss assessment tasks without a genuine reason can be dealt with fairly and consistently by school managers when there is school code of conduct and disciplinary policies which are communicated to the learners through their representatives. Practically, school managers who find it difficult to maintain discipline at their schools are those who operate in isolation from the learner representative council. It is in the interest of this study to advocate that partnership between school managers and the representative council of the learners is a key towards effective implementation of continuous assessment policy.

2.3.4. The motivational role of school managers

Motivation is usually defined as an internal state that arouses, directs, and maintains behaviour (Wolfolk, 2007:372). This definition reveals three components of motivation: *arousing human behaviour, directing human behaviour, and maintaining human behaviour*. According to

Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2010: *Online from* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motivation>), motivation is defined as the activation or energisation of goal-oriented behaviour.

Contemplating on what the literature presents as definitions of motivation, one can argue that human behaviour and outcomes are at the centre of every motivation theory. The ultimate goal of motivation is to keep educators working towards the attainment of goals or outcomes by energising, directing and maintaining their behaviour. Just working for salary is sometimes not enough for educators to stay at schools. Although some educators are still kept at schools by getting a salary, the majority of them start to realise that it is fulfilling to achieve goals. So they must be kept working at their full potential. If no motivation is present in educators, those educators' quality of work or all work in general will deteriorate. The job of school manager is, therefore, to get things done through staff. To do this, the manager should be able to motivate his or her staff. This argument is supported by Mason (2004: 41), since he points out that motivation should be understood as a management strategy to persuade people to change, to release staff's trapped potential and to bring out the best in people, to improve teaching and learning and to satisfy some psychological need in an individual for the benefit of both the individual and the school.

I believe that motivation has always been a missing link in the implementation process of the CASS policy in South Africa. Many unpleasant problems of CASS implementation developed as a result of the low motivational levels of educators in schools. The low motivational levels might have been as a result of the interplay of factors mentioned early in this study, such as unbearable workloads, class sizes, lack of parent involvement, learners' behavioural problems. It is the school managers' responsibility to keep educators moving energetically towards a goal or to work hard, even if the implementation task is difficult. The school manager must, therefore, continue to ask himself or herself, "What energizes and directs my staff's behaviour?" According to Wolfolk (2007:372-373), the explanation could be drives, needs, incentives, fears, goals, social pressure, self-confidence, interests, curiosity, beliefs, values, expectations, and more.

Moreover the school manager should know how to set tangible and achievable goals, have high expectations, and where necessary make available incentives that are directed at meeting the individual educator's needs. School managers who intuitively believe that the organisation will

benefit if staff members are enthusiastic and thorough in their work will always find ways to motivate their staff. When the school managers engage wittingly with staff motivation, the staff will become more productive; hence will triumph in the face of overwhelming challenges confronting implementation of continuous assessment. There are three reasons suggested by previous literature why motivated staff makes an organisation more effective:

- Motivated employees are always looking for better ways of doing their job and will usually find them.
- Motivated workers are usually concerned about quality.
- Highly motivated workers are more productive than apathetic ones (Anderson and Kyprianou as cited in Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2007:135).

Finally, I perceive that the country has failed to equip school managers with adequate knowledge on the theories and practice of staff motivation. Consequently, most school managers fail to induce their subordinates to work harder, faster, more efficiently and with greater enthusiasm. CASS can be successfully implemented if school managers become aware of basic human needs and motivation theories and processes.

2.3.5. The monitoring and supporting role of the school managers

The new assessment policy provides the opportunity for educators to use different methods and learner-centred techniques. Educators who are not familiar with these methods will not function until they are trained and have received follow-up support in order to implement these methods successfully. School managers should provide in-school support with regard to the implementation of the new assessment policy. Mason (2004:47-48) indicates that the School Management Team (SMT) should, among other things, monitor and support:

- Content teaching to ensure that the content for teaching and learning is in line with the assessment standards.
- Integration in planning and presentation to ensure that integration of assessment standards and various methods of teaching are done properly.

- Learning outcomes and assessment standards to ensure that learning outcomes and assessment standards are correctly arranged to allow progression.
- Learner-centred and learner-paced teaching to ensure that the teaching pace is determined by the learners' learning progress.
- CASS to ensure that assessment is not done once off, like in the form of examination, but takes place on a continuous basis.

Monitoring and support remain critical issues in ensuring that the implementation of CASS is successful. This is simply because of two reasons, (a) there is no adequate training for the wide array of assessment strategies used by educators, which may lead to educators using wrong assessment strategies, and (b) educators need to be taught how to select, modify, and develop assessment tasks (IAEA, 2006:4). School managers' constant monitoring and support will ensure that assessment standards are not compromised and an increase in the level of learners' achievement will be realised in the Mopani District. In this connotation, IAEA's (2006:12) paper suggests that monitoring the actual implementation of assessment process should cover the following aspects: ensuring compliance with policy, assessment tasks are designed in accordance with the subject guidelines, assessment tasks are administered in accordance with the principles of good assessment, assessment evidence is marked according to the marking guidelines, and marks are totaled and recorded as per policy.

In my opinion, monitoring and support are seem to be lacking in most schools in Mopani District, while educators who do not perform are condemned in management meetings instead of being supported.

2.4. TRAINING NEEDS OF SCHOOL MANAGERS IN CASS

The paper submitted to the 2006 IAEA Annual Conference purports that it is essential that, as a first step, all managers be provided with intensive management training relating specifically to management of assessment (IAEA, 2006:9). According to this IAEA paper, training should be twofold, training in the contents of the policy and training, relating to the management of the policy. In my view, the training of school managers has been an oversight in South Africa, where

school managers have often been omitted from the training relating to the new curriculum. Goldstein's (2002:2) argument that "shouldn't education, like law and medicine, be considered a profession? Nobody complains about forcing lawyers to pass the Bar Exam or doctors to slave through at least four years of training before being given the licence to operate". On the basis of the foregoing argument, I contribute that there is a need to develop a lengthy formal training programme for school managers in the district.

In this study, I argue that, while a general understanding of the paradigm shift in assessment policy and practice has been acknowledged, the actual implementation has been hampered by the lack of appropriate training for school managers. To deal with the educator challenges at a local level, a local school manager should be equipped with necessary skills to ensure that the optimal level of curriculum (CASS) implementation is attained. In my capacity as a Head of Department, I have found the capacity of the Province to provide training to principals and HoDs wanting. For the process of implementing CASS to be successful, school managers should be immersed in an extensive programme that will not only cover aspects of school management, but should address all facets of CASS.

2.5. SUMMARY

The literature review here describes the role which the school managers should play in addressing challenges associated with the implementation of the CASS policy in the Mopani District, Limpopo Province. In the light of the challenges identified by previous studies and my own observations, the role of the school managers will include inter alia, developing and managing assessment instruments, installing methods or strategies as instructional leader, managing parent support and involvement, monitoring and supporting curriculum, motivating and supporting staff and learners, and managing learners through an efficient disciplinary policy. It is assumed that if school managers engage in the roles described, the situation in schools would improve for the better. It is also suggested that for the dire conditions relating to the ineffective implementation to change in schools in Mopani District, school leadership should be committed to the "traditional" roles described in the literature review chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction of continuous assessment in South Africa brought numerous challenges as highlighted in the previous chapter. The focus of this study is to address the following guiding and central research question: *What is the role of school managers in addressing challenges associated with the implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training Band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province, and to what degree do school managers engage in performing the “traditional” leadership and management roles such as instructional leadership, the management of parent involvement, staff motivation, learners’ management, and monitoring and support?* The main focus of this chapter is to outline the methodological process I chose to generate and analyse data.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology is a description and analysis of methods chosen, of their limitations and resources, of clarifying their presuppositions and consequences (Naidoo, 2006:64). Expounding from this, Henning (2004:36) refers to methodology as the coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the “goodness of fit” to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the research purpose. This study is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The research methodology is a mixed research design with a concurrent triangulation strategy. For the purpose of this investigation, I concurrently administered a quantitative instrument (questionnaire) which was used to elicit information relating to the school managers’ perception of CASS policy, their roles in the implementation of CASS, and their effectiveness in addressing challenges associated with CASS implementation. At the same time I conducted some semi-structured interviews at multiple sites.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer research question(s) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:117). McMillan and Schumacher maintain that the goal of a research design is to provide results that are judged to be credible. According to Creswell (2009:3), research designs are plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collections and analysis. The research design is simply a plan or proposal to conduct a research (Creswell, 2009:5). Expounding from this, Charles and Mertler (2002:384) refer to research design as the overall, detailed plan that shows how researcher intends to obtain, analyse, and interpret data. There are three types of research designs, namely quantitative, qualitative, and the mixed-method research approach. For the purpose of this study, the mixed-research approach was adopted.

3.3.1 Quantitative and Qualitative research approaches

Creswell (2009:4) asserts that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. He adds that the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. He further defines quantitative research as the means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables.

3.3.2 Mixed-method research approach

Creswell (as quoted by Maree, 2007:261) defines the mixed methods research as a procedure for collecting, analysing and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research process within a single study to understand a research problem more completely. The mixed-method design is when quantitative and qualitative methods and analyses are combined in a single study. The mixed-method studies incorporate the strengths of different approaches to research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:418). In support of this, Creswell (2009:4) defines mixed method design as an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and

quantitative forms. Christensen and Johnson (2004:1) believe that quantitative and qualitative research methods are compatible, and that they can both be used in a single research study. They further add that, in a mixed-method design, the researcher uses the strength of additional methods to overcome the weakness of another method (Christensen & Johnson, 2004:4).

According to Creswell (2003:23), the mixed-method design suits the researcher who enjoys both the structure of quantitative research and the flexibility of qualitative research. This argument is a strong one in support of the mixed-method research for this study. To investigate the role of school managers in the implementation of CASS demanded that I captured the best of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. My aim was to collect diverse types of data which would provide the best understanding of the research problem (Christensen & Johnson, 2004:4). This study utilised a concurrent triangulation strategy of inquiry. Table 3.1 represents the different types of mixed-research design and their purposes.

Table 3.1 Types and purposes of mixed-research design

Types	Design	Purpose(s)
Explanatory	Quantitative method followed by qualitative method	Qualitative data are used to elucidate, elaborate on, or explain quantitative findings (e.g. outliers of different groups). Qualitative data are used to develop a quantitative instrument or survey.
Exploratory	Qualitative method followed by quantitative method.	Using qualitative data to establish groups to be compared. Using quantitative data to explore relationships found in qualitative data.
Triangulation	Quantitative and qualitative methods are used concurrently.	To provide a more comprehensive and complete picture of data by converging data analysis methods and offsetting strengths and weaknesses of each method.

(Adapted from McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:405).

According to Creswell (2009:213), the researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data

concurrently and then compares the two databases to determine if there is convergence, differences, or some combinations. Data collection in this study was concurrent and happened in one phase of the research study. I conducted two separate surveys, one with educators and the other with school managers from 18 randomly sampled schools which were sampled from 6 circuits. At the same time I conducted semi-structured interviews with the school principals, deputy principals and heads of departments. The rationale for using both the quantitative and qualitative methods in this study was as a means to offset the weaknesses inherent within one method with the strength of the other (or conversely, the strength of one adds to the strength of the other (Creswell, 2009:213).

3.3.3 Population and Samples

3.3.3.1 Population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and from which I intend to generalise the results of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:119). Airasian and Gay (2003:102) indicate that a population is the group of interest to the researcher; the group to which the results of the study will be generalised. According to Charles and Mertler (2002:45), the population includes all the individuals within certain descriptive parameters, such as location, age or sex while Neuman (2003:216) states that the researcher's target population is a particular pool of individuals or cases that he or she wants to study. The target population in this study consisted of school educators, head of departments, deputy principals and principals in the FET band in the Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

3.3.3.2 Sampling

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:119), a sample is the group of subjects or participants from whom the data are collected. The authors add that it is important for the researcher to carefully and completely define both the target population and the sampling frame.

a) Quantitative and Qualitative sampling

In this study, I used purposive sampling. In the qualitative approach, inquirers view the sampling process as dynamic, ad hoc, and phatic rather than static or a priori parameters of populations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:321). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:126), in purposive sampling the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic of interest. They add that, on the basis of the researcher's knowledge of the population, a judgment is made about which subjects should be selected to provide the best information to address the purpose of the study. Expanding on this, Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2000:103) state that the researcher who uses purposive sampling selects the sample for a specific purpose.

The rationale for using purposive sampling in this study was to increase the utility of information obtained from small samples (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 319). Again the six circuits in the district are representative of the population and meet the purpose for the study. Furthermore, the two schools per circuit meet the purpose of the study in that one school represents the good performers and another bad performers, and also the educators involved in the filling of questionnaires were teaching Accounting, Mathematics and Physical Sciences, the head of departments or the deputy principals and the school principals were all engaged in general school management which includes curriculum management.

To select the eighteen schools that participated in this study a simple random sampling was used. According to Maree (2007:173), the crucial part of this method is that the numbers should be determined randomly (a good example of a mechanism that generates random numbers is the national lottery). He further adds that the two popular mechanisms that are used to obtain random numbers are pre-compiled tables of random numbers and computer software. In this study, a table of random numbers was used. Sampling from a school population of 24 schools, I grouped my random numbers in two digits between 01 and 24. And I ignored all numbers greater than 24.

b) Consideration of sample size

Sample size is referred to as the number of subjects in a study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 127). They add that the general rule in determining a sample size is to obtain a sufficient number

to provide a credible result. The sample size in this study was determined by addressing aspects such as sample representativeness of the population.

The population studied was homogeneous since it only consisted of similar subjects (school educators and members of the SMT with respect to important variables that are studied. According to Maree (2007:178), generally, in homogeneous populations, where the members are similar with respect to variables that were important to the study, smaller samples may adequately represent the population. The determination of this sample size was also considerate of the impact of the following factors: type of research, the importance of the results, financial constraints, number of variables studied, the methods of data collection, and the size of the population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:129-130). Table 3.3 represents the sample size for this study that is conducted in the district with at least 24 circuits.

Table 3.2 Sample size

Designation	Targeted Number	Actual Number	%	Instrument
Circuits	8 out of 24	6	25%	
Schools	24 (3 per sampled circuit)	18	75%	
Principals	6 (1 per sampled school)	5	83.3%	Interview schedule
	24 (1 per sampled school)	16	66.7%	Questionnaire
Deputy Principals	24 (1 per sampled school)	15	62.5%	Questionnaire
	6 (per sampled circuit)	3	50%	Interview Schedules
School HOD's	6 (1 per sampled school)	5	83.3%	Interview Schedules
	48 (2 per sampled school)	39	81.3%	Questionnaire
Educators	96 (4 per sampled school)	80	83.3%	Questionnaire

A total of 13 participants (N=13) were interviewed out of a 24 participants initial targeted and 150 questionnaires out of targeted 192 questionnaires were successfully filled and returned.

3.3.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected at about the same time using a triangulation design. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:28), triangulation is used when the strengths of one method offset the weaknesses of the other, so that together they provide a more comprehensive set of data. Creswell *et al.*, (cited in Maree, 2007:266) state that the triangulation method is the most suitable one when the researcher wants to collect both types of data at the same time about a single phenomenon in order to compare and contrast the different findings to produce well-validated conclusions.

3.3.4.1 Quantitative data collection

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:178) state that quantitative measurement uses some type of instrument or device to obtain numerical indices that correspond to characteristics of the subjects. They further expand that the numerical values are then summarised and reported as the results of the study. According to Neuman (2003:542), quantitative data collection involves gathering information in the form of numbers. In this study, two separate questionnaires for educators and school managers (School principals and deputy principals) were constructed and used to collect data.

a) Questionnaire

A questionnaire is the most widely used technique for obtaining information from subjects. A questionnaire is relatively economical, has the same questions for all subjects, and can ensure anonymity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:194). In this study, the aim of the educators' questionnaire was to solicit information on how school managers were assisting them to deal with challenges facing the implementation of CASS, and the questionnaire on the school managers (school principal, deputy principals, and head of departments) was mainly intended to find out about their perceptions on the CASS system and how they perceived their roles in the implementation of CASS and how engagement in these roles would address problems associated with the implementation of the CASS process, and to further explore the degree at which they

engaged in what is termed “traditional” leadership and management roles. In designing the questionnaire, I paid attention to the following: appearance of the questionnaire, question sequence, wording of questions, and response categories (Maree, 2007:158-159).

The design of the questionnaire for this study followed some of the guidelines alluded to by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:197-201). The questionnaire included: Open-ended and closed-ended items, and the statements to which the subjects responded by making choices from options such as always, often, sometimes, rarely and never.

Reliability of the questionnaire

The reliability of an instrument means that if the same instrument is used at different times or administered to different subjects from the same population, the findings should be the same. In other words, reliability is the extent to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistent (Maree, 2007:215). In this study, to ensure reliability, I used “test-retest reliability”. I administered the instrument to the same group of educators and school managers on two occasions, and then obtained the first set of scores which I compared with the second set of scores by calculating a correlation coefficient. According to Maree (2007:215), such a coefficient will take on a value close to zero if the instrument has a low reliability, and close to one if it has a high reliability.

3.3.4.2 Qualitative data collection

The qualitative phases of data collection and analysis are interwoven and occur in overlapping cycles (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:322). According to Neuman (2003:542), qualitative data collection involves gathering information in the form of words, pictures, sounds, visual images, or objects. In this study, I followed the five phases of data collection suggested by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:322-323):

- Phase 1: Planning – I located and gained permission to use the research site or network persons.

- Phase 2: Beginning of data collection - I obtained data primarily to become orientated and to gain a sense of the totality for purposeful sampling. I also adjusted my interviewing and recording procedures to the site or persons involved.
- Phase 3: Basic data collection – As an inquirer I begun to hear and see what was occurring, which went beyond just listening and looking. Tentative data analysis began as I mentally processed ideas and facts while collecting data.
- Phase 4: Closing data collection – I conducted the last interview and left the field. Ending data collection is related to the research problem and the richness of the collected data.
- Phase 5: Completion – Completion of active data collecting blends into formal data analysis and construction of meaningful ways to present the data.

a) Interviews

According to Maree (2007:87), an interview is a two-way conversation in which an interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. He further points out that the aim of qualitative interviews is always to obtain rich descriptive data that will help you understand the participant's construction of knowledge and social reality. Interviews are one of the most commonly known forms of qualitative research, and if the persons interviewed value the topic and trust the interviewer, they will supply information that will not be obtained in any other way.

In this study, face-to-face interviews or semi-structured interviews were conducted with five school principals, three deputy principals and five head of departments from six sampled circuits. Creswell (2009:179) identifies one advantage of face-to-face interviews as that it is useful when participants cannot be directly observed. According to Maree (2007:87), in the structured interview, questions are detailed and developed in advance, much as they are in survey research.

Recording an interview must be done in a meticulous manner (Maree, 2007:89). In this study, I used a tape recorder with the permission of the participant to record the interview data. I also took notes so that I could review the answers and ask additional questions at the end of the

interview. In addition, I made a written record (transcript) of what was said for the data analysis purposes.

3.3.5 Data analysis

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures were used to make sense of the collected data. After I collected information by means of qualitative and quantitative approaches, I started the analysis process by capturing raw data on a computer as numbers and interview transcriptions.

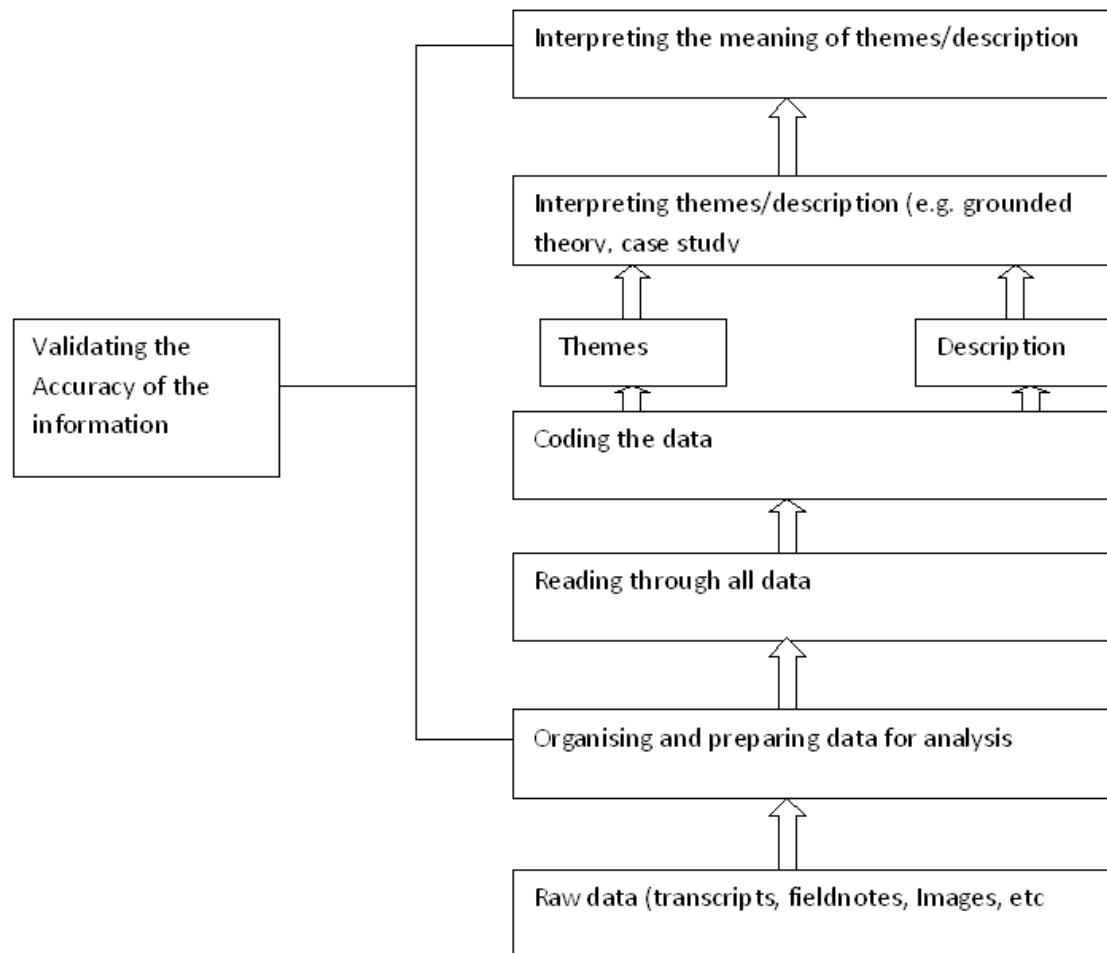
3.3.5.1 Qualitative data analysis

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:364), qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (i.e. relationships) among the categories. According to Maree (2007:99), qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative (non-linear) process, implying that data collection, processing, analysis and reporting are intertwined, not merely a number of successive steps. Expounding on the foregoing, Creswell (2009:184) states that qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytical questions, and writing memos throughout the study.

Since qualitative data analysis is an ongoing, cyclical process that is integrated into all phases of qualitative research, I used the general process of inductive data analysis to code, categorise, and interpret data in order to provide explanations of the phenomenon of interest.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:366), interim analysis occurs during data collection and serves two purposes: (a) to make data collection decisions and (b) to identify recurring topics. Figure 3.1 reinforces the above discussion.

Figure 3.1 Data analysis in qualitative research



(Adapted from Creswell, 2009:185).

Figure 3.1 suggests a linear, hierarchical approach building from the bottom to the top, but it is interactive with interrelated stages which are not always visited in the order presented. In this study, levels in figure 3.1 were followed:

Step 1: Organising and preparing data – I transcribed the interviews, optically scanning materials (minutes of meetings), typing up fields notes, or sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the sources of information.

Step 2: Reading through all the data – A first step is to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on their overall meaning. I tried to get what general ideas are participants

revealing, what the tone of the ideas was, and what the impression of the overall depth, credibility, and use of the information is.

Step 3: Coding – According to Maree (2007:105), coding is the process of reading carefully through your transcribed data, line by line, and dividing them into meaningful analytical units. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:368), a data segment is comprehensive by itself and contains one idea, episode, or piece of relevant information. They add that a segment can be of any size, a word, a few lines, a sentence, or several pages containing an entire event or participants' explanations. In this study coding was done by marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or unique identifying names.

Step 4: Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis. I used coding to generate a small number of themes or categories. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 367), it is often easiest to use predetermined categories, especially with an interview guide, or the research questions or topics about which you are quite knowledgeable.

Step 5: Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative. I used the narrative approach to convey the findings of the analysis. Discussions were used to mention a chronology of events, the detailed discussion of several themes (complete with subthemes, specific illustrations, multiple perspectives from individuals, and quotations).

Step 6: Interpretation – A final step followed in data analysis involved making an interpretation or meaning of the data by asking myself “What were the lessons learned?”

3.3.5.2 Quantitative data analysis

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:149) indicates that quantitative research relies heavily on numbers in reporting results, sampling, and providing estimates of instrument reliability and validity. According to McMillan and Schumacher the numbers are usually accompanied by unrecognised words or even stranger symbols and manipulated by statistics which are methods

of organising and analysing quantitative data. Neuman (2003:331) states that, in quantitative data analysis, a researcher provides the charts, graphs, and tables to give readers a condensed picture of the data.

In this study, a set of numbers or observations were transformed into indices that describe or characterise the data using descriptive statistics. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 150), descriptive statistics are used to summarise, organise, and reduce large numbers of observations. They further reiterate that descriptive statistics portray and focus on *what is* with respect to the sampled data, for example, What is the average reading grade level of the fifth graders in the school? In this study, the types of descriptive analyses used are those classified under univariate analyses which include frequency distribution tables, histograms, bar graphs, and percentages.

Since this study has adopted a mixed method research approach, data analyses occurred both within and between the quantitative (descriptive analysis) and the qualitative (description and thematic text). I quantified the qualitative data by creating codes and themes qualitatively, then I counted the number of times they occurred in the text data. This quantification of qualitative data enabled me to compare quantitative results with the qualitative data. In this study, I generated three themes from the “general” section of the questionnaire which I then compared with the results obtained from the interviews with school managers. I also used cross-tabulation to investigate patterns or possible relationships in the data.

3.4 QUALITY CRITERIA

3.4.1 Trustworthiness (reliability, dependability)

According to Maree (2007:297), trustworthiness refers to the way in which the inquirer is able to persuade the audience that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to and that the research is of high quality. Since this study applied mixed methods to research, the trustworthiness of the data included various aspects such as reliability, dependability and generalisability in both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.4.1.1 Reliability

Reliability in quantitative research is the extent to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistent (Maree, 2007:215). To ensure the reliability of quantitative data, I used the agreement type of reliability. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:186), agreement is established by determining the extent to which two or more persons agree about what they have seen, heard, or rated. Qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Creswell, 2009:190). The reliability procedures considered in this study included:

- Checking transcripts to make sure that they did not contain obvious mistakes during transcription.
- Making sure that there was no drift in the definition of codes, a shift of the meaning of the codes during the process of coding (Creswell, 2009:190).

3.4.1.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings indeed occur as the researcher say they did (Maree, 2007:297). The dependability in this study was proved by conducting interviews and the questionnaire survey. I aimed to achieve dependability by employing member checking in this study.

3.4.2 Validity

Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures (Creswell, 2009:190). He adds that validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research, and is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account. In this study, I employed the following validity strategies to ensure the accuracy of the findings:

- I triangulated different data sources of information by examining evidence from the

sources and using it to build coherent justification for themes.

- I used member checking to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to the participants and determining whether these participants felt that they were accurate.
- I employed rich, thick descriptions to convey my findings.
- I clarified the bias I might have brought to the study.
- I presented negative or discrepant information that could run counter to the themes.
- I spent prolonged time in the field.
- I used an external auditor to review the entire project. In this case my supervisor will review the entire project at the conclusion of the study (Creswell, 2009:19-192).

Quantitative validity is the extent to which inferences made on the basis of numerical scores are appropriate, meaningful, and useful (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:179). In this study, validity was ensured by identifying assumptions or making arguments to justify an inference or use for a specific purpose. A pilot study was also conducted to address any shortcomings in the instrument (questionnaire) used in the study and to ensure their appropriateness.

In short, with regard to qualitative data analysis I used procedures suggested by Maree (2007:113-115) to determine the trustworthiness of the analysed data. These procedures encompassed using multiple data sources, verifying raw data, using multiple coders, stakeholder checks, verifying and validating the findings, avoiding generalisations, choosing quotes carefully, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity, and stating the limitation of the study upfront.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who participate in a study, which involves issues of physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:16). The following were the ethical considerations in this study:

3.5.1 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:399) contend that researchers have a dual responsibility, firstly, the protection of the participant's confidence from other actors in the setting whose private information might enable them to identify them and secondly, the protection of informants from the general reading public. For Burns, both the researcher and participant must have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of a study (Burns as quoted in Maree, 2007:299). Flowing from this, all reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the participants were taken. All the information and responses shared by the participants during this study will be kept private and the results will be presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the participants' identities. All audiocassettes used during the study will be destroyed as soon as the data analysis was done and study completed.

3.5.2 Informed consent and voluntary participation

Initial contacts with potential participants were made at different schools and the participants were provided with information related to the study. In addition, a letter of information providing details of the study was distributed to potential participants. An assurance of confidentiality and anonymity was provided to all the participants. I obtained verbal informed consent before the questionnaires were administered. In addition, I ascertained the availability of and willingness by the participants to take part in the follow-up interviews at a later stage. The potential participants were not required to give an immediate response; instead they were asked to fill-in, sign and fax their consent forms at a later date. This minimised the effect where potential participants might have felt discourteous to refuse.

3.5.3 Participants' right to decline

Each participant was verbally informed of his or her right to decline participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

3.5.4 Arrangements for participants to receive information

The participants were provided with a copy of the transcript for approval before any data were analysed. All the participants were provided with the final analysis of the data obtained.

3.6 PILOT STUDY

3.6.1 Quantitative pilot study

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:202), it is highly recommended that researchers conduct a pilot test of their questionnaires before using them in studies. In this study, I located a sample of participants or subjects with characteristics similar to those that would be used in the study and administered the questionnaire to them. Before distributing questionnaires to the entire sample, I used a sample size of 5 educators, 10 school managers (school principals, deputy principals and head of departments) not forming part of the actual study and implemented the questionnaires on them in order to find out whether it took too long to complete, and whether the directions and items were clear.

3.6.2 Qualitative pilot study

The qualitative pilot study was conducted in the form of pre-interviews with two principals, one deputy principal and two head of departments. The aim of the pre-interview was to assist me in examining the research questions to determine whether they were well phrased or formulated. The length of the pre-interviews enabled me to know how to schedule the participants for interviews as the information gathered during the pilot study made me aware of the duration of each interview.

3.7 SUMMARY

Chapter three outlined the methodology employed in this study by comparing the three research designs and strategies utilised to ensure the trustworthiness (validity, reliability, and

dependability) of the collected and analysed data. The rationale for choosing the mixed method research was situated in the fact that in the mixed method research both numerical and text data are collected and analysed to address different aspects of the same general research problem and provide a fuller understanding (Maree, 2007:15). The other reason for choosing the mixed method research design was the fact that the research problem presented in this study could easily be addressed when both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were combined.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the methodology used in this study was outlined while the literature review chapter provided background to this report. This chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were obtained by presenting and interpreting various themes and findings which emerged from the data collected through semi-structured interviews. The data obtained by means of the qualitative research approach were processed by transcribing all the interviews and analysing the findings according to different themes.

During the quantitative data collection, two different questionnaires were distributed, one to the educators and another to the school management team. After retrieving the questionnaires from the respondents, they were analysed statistically, using frequency distribution tables and two-way frequency table (cross tabulations). The data were sometimes represented graphically. The two questionnaires were analysed separately and a matrix formed accordingly.

4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA

In this study, interviews were conducted with five school principals, three deputy principals, and five heads of departments. The interviews were recorded on a tape recorder and later transcribed to make the data analysis easier. The questions posed to the school managers were organised into various themes so that their responses could be properly analysed. The themes which emerged from the findings are presented and interpreted as follows:

4.2.1 The general perception of school managers on the criteria-referenced assessment

The findings in this study delineate that the introduction of CASS in schools is perceived by most school managers as a major drawback in the education system in South Africa. When asked whether the introduction of criteria-referenced assessment makes learners learn better compared to the traditional norm-referenced assessment, ten out of thirteen school managers viewed that the criteria-referenced assessment had lowered the standard of education in the country. Some of the reasons advanced for their perception encompassed a wide range of challenges or problems such as CASS increases the teachers' workload, CASS does not adequately prepare learners for the future, CASS work given to learners is minimal, and CASS requires expensive resources such as computers and internet for learners and educators. The following extract underlines these responses:

"No, I wouldn't say it helps, there are some hiccups there and there wherein learners do not read, but in a traditional way of testing learners most of the learners could read but if you check now most learners cannot read cannot even write. So those are the challenges we facing in the new curriculum."

The opinions of school managers with regard to CASS could be a possible explanation for the status of implementation of CASS in the district. The school managers' negative attitude towards the criteria-referenced assessment could further explain how complex the problem of CASS is, and it demands a top-down approach to solve. The top-down approach means that the Department of Education should invest in developing favourable attitudes in school managers before educators are called to duty.

4.2.2 CASS training for school managers

The twelve school managers interviewed indicated that they had not received adequate training in CASS. The following response testified that school managers had been operating the system without proper or adequate CASS training:

"Ah, training it depends on what you mean by training. Ah, you see sometimes I can sit with you for ten minutes or so giving me information on something you may think that you trained me, but I think the training we received is not I can't call it proper training. Yes, training has been received but you find that eh the training we receive

is a one day training that is dominated by lot of talking and lot of other things not concentrating on the CASS itself. But at the end of the day, there is less we benefit from such kind of training. And I think the training is not enough, so to say.”

Probing into few responses by school managers, I asked how they were implementing CASS if not sufficiently trained, the following response was given:

“The implementation is according to a teacher’s understanding, well I do implement and do pursue the line that I think is right more especial in my department where in which I, ah draw the lines along which I preferred my people in my department to work along. But really it is up to individual teachers even though we do meet on the departmental meeting we discuss on how best we can implement, actually we always come up with different ideas, so as such I can’t say there is a specific way we are pursuing.”

It emerged from the data that the Department of Education had overlooked the aspect of training prior to the introduction of the new assessment policy. The findings also reveal that the minimal trainings which were offered came as one or two day workshops, which meant that information was just cascaded to the school managers to absorb. This led to a myriad frustration of school managers as they were trying to figure out ways to deal with the plethora of assessment policies and guidelines handed down to them to interpret and implement. In trying to implement CASS, and monitor and support teachers the school managers have to rely on their own understanding of the policy documents.

The unfolding data analysis of this theme further revealed that even when training was offered, the majority of the school managers were dissatisfied with the competency levels of the facilitators. The following responses testified to this:

“Ah, you see we have a problem in Limpopo Province with regard to assessment or with regard to NCS as a whole. The facilitators or those who were taken to training by the Department of Education, they are also incompetent to deal with the whole work of the NCS, and as such it remains a problem for the teacher and the very same subject heads or the subject advisors, because at times teachers pose questions to their subject heads and the subject heads will refer those questions to subject advisors, but subject advisors will fail to give answers to those questions.”

When I asked one school principal how she was implementing CASS at her school if training was not sufficient, she said: *“It is a policy, a national one, so even if we have not received an*

effective training we must implement CASS.” This striking revelation could mean that what makes school managers forge through the implementing challenges is basically the fear for accountability rather than their understanding of the policy. It could be argued that lack of CASS training directly affects the implementation of CASS.

4.2.3 Management functions or duties to support the implementation of CASS

The following four sub-categories were considered under this theme:

a) Management of parent involvement

The findings in the study delineated that the school managers at various levels had more or less similar concerns with regard to parent participation in their schools. Each manager interviewed acknowledged the importance of parents in the implementation of CASS, however, they all admitted that the parents’ involvement was not satisfactory in their schools. One school principal indicated that he had been observing a breaking down of parent involvement in his school over the past years. The foregoing is illustrated by his comments:

“I am worried about the lack of involvement of parents. And over the years, I have seen it going down and down and down.”

Thus, it emerged from the collected data that parent participation in schools is far below fifty percent. It was also revealed from the findings that some of the impediments to parents’ involvement encompassed illiteracy and ignorance of parents, and the unavailability of certain parents, particularly those who work on the farms. Another problem that emerged was regarding learners who head families or who are staying with older people. Illiteracy of most parents appeared to be a critical hindrance to parent participation in the district. The following comments raised by one school manager illustrate this fact:

“In our community, most especially this community, there is a bit of a problem because, let me put it that way, this way, our, the parents are sort of illiterate. So it becomes a problem, is not so easy for them to assist us.”

Another participant, a head of department stated:

“If we are having problems with learners we do call the parents to school and discuss about the problem but we are having the problem of involving them in CASS because most of the parents are illiterate, they don’t know what is CASS, if we show them this is what is needed, they don’t have any idea.”

The findings further accentuated that school managers did not have a defined programme for parent involvement. In most schools the involvement of parents was haphazardly done. Most school managers acknowledged that they only invited parents to school when the educators were experiencing a disciplinary problem with a learner or when they were called to collect quarterly progress reports. It is evident from the foregoing that crucial aspects of parent involvement which the literature chapter highlighted were undermined by most of the school managers. The literature also enumerates a considerable number of modes to be considered by the school managers in order to successfully communicate with parents. But the findings reveal that school managers prefer parent meetings or evenings as a mode of communicating with parents. Only one school principal indicated that in supplement to parents meetings, his school employed parent-educator meetings or interviews.

b) Support and motivation of educators

From these qualitative data it emerged that subject meetings, departmental meetings, school-based, circuit-based and district-based workshops and discussions during staff meetings were the major vehicles the school managers were using to support educators in their respective schools. It is also worthwhile to take cognizance of the fact that the findings also revealed that four of the five school principals interviewed viewed the “support role” as the responsibility of the head of departments and curriculum advisors.

Another striking revelation in the findings is that when the school managers were asked about the motivation levels of their subordinates, eleven of them indicated that the motivation level was low while only two seemed satisfied with the motivation levels of their staff. The two school

managers who were quite satisfied with the motivation of their staff were attached to schools which usually have good grade 12 results. One deputy principal noted:

“The motivation of our teacher has escalated just because of our results which are better. So it is a big challenge because they are afraid to go back, so that’s why the motivation is high.”

It is apparent from these findings that the motivation levels of educators are dependent on the school’s performance in the grade 12 results as one principal commented when I tried to probe from her responses to find out whether her staff was motivated. She reported:

“At the moment no, in our school we only got 14% last year and I was one of the teachers teaching grade 12 then though I was not yet the principal.”

The findings also revealed that novice educators’ motivation levels were low as compared to veterans who had been operating the CASS system for a long time. Although this is the case, no school manager indicated whether his or her school had an induction or mentoring programme to take these new educators on board with regard to assessment. However, school managers believed that the motivation of staff might improve if conditions such as abnormally large classes and the lack of resources would be attended to by the Department of Education.

c) Management of learners

It was evident from the school managers’ responses that the new assessment policy is fraught with learners’ disciplinary problems. It was apparent from the data collected that the school managers were echoing common concerns that problems such as a high degree of learners’ absenteeism were common to all schools. This was posing a serious challenge to educators as the majority of learners miss assessment tasks, and most of the time without genuine reasons. It was also revealed that what made matters worse was that most of the formal assessment tasks done by the learners were common for all schools in the circuit or district. When a learner missed such a task the educator had no choice but to give the learner the same task or develop another one. The school managers’ responses also revealed that the learners had developed a tendency of absenting themselves from school during assessment dates in order to get an unfair advantage of

seeing the question paper before they could write. The challenge of giving learners another task is that it increases the workload of educators. The following comment testifies to this:

“I think it is a tendency of learners to miss certain task, and then they know that they will be given chance to write and then in their own time because according to the policy in as far as CASS is concerned learners should not miss one or two assessment tasks, so they just do it deliberately knowing that they will be given another time to come and write. It is a challenge to us teachers because you have to mark all the work that you have already marked. And then that time could be used for other things.”

When dealing with learners who miss assessment tasks without genuine reasons, the school managers indicated that they either called the parents or learners completed declaration forms acknowledging their failure to write a particular CASS task. One school principal stated:

“In terms of the policy guidelines wherein if a learner misses tests they have to write in ah... they fill in the forms which are entitled failure to write a test, and then if the reasons are not genuine, then the learner will forfeit those marks on the said task.”

Emerging from these data, school managers failed to make reference to the South African Schools' Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 in dealing with learners who miss assessment tasks. It was also obvious that contradictions emerged when the school managers' responses were juxtaposed with SASA in terms of the stipulations of dealing with learners' misconduct. Only one school principal made reference to the school code of conduct which was communicated to the parents. The majority of school managers failed to indicate how the school governing body is involved in disciplinary cases. Again, the school managers failed to reveal how they involved representative council of learners in their dealings with issues of misconduct. The responses by the school managers on how they deal with learners who miss assessment tasks without genuine reasons delineated the failure of school managers to deal with learners' disciplinary problems within the boundaries of the policy.

d) The monitoring of educators

The findings with regard to monitoring revealed that the responses of school managers did not fairly resonate with contemporary literature. The responses were incongruent with the literature

in the sense that twelve school managers did not present a clear “check” system through which they ensure that educators adhere to the assessment guidelines. Instead, they mentioned the provision of policy documents, conducting workshops on CASS guidelines, and were encouraging educators to consult assessment guidelines when they teach and assess learners, class visiting and pre-administration moderation as the way of monitoring educators’ practices. Only one school principal presented a clear and definite “control” or “check” system which was in place in his school to ensure that his educators were adhering to the assessment guidelines when assessing learners. He stated: “*Firstly, somebody once said, “In God we trust, on man we check.”* Then he presented the two monitoring systems used in his school that ensured that educators do not deviate from the assessment guidelines as they conduct CASS in their classrooms. These comments illustrate how his monitoring system works:

“I receive every single teacher’s file at least once a quarter, firstly the preparations, the books, all the assessment goes to the HOD, the HOD will take a sample of books, the preparation file, see all necessary documentation, minutes of subject meetings and all, must be handed in to the HOD, the HOD will then write the report, the last part of the report will be open for the comment by the principal. Then those files come to my office, I look at them in the afternoon or late at night, I go through them all, I sign the script of the children, I check on tests, I check on memos, I in fact go through the files, all of them. And then I sign them, I have a controlled sheet where one can open and see for the past ten years I have signed a particular teachers’ files, the new ones and the old ones, there are people who have been attached to the school for longer periods, and then those reports are filed, one in the subject file in my office, one in the teacher’s file. Then it is for the HOD, it is compulsory to discuss with the teacher, you know, the report that was written. This is one control mechanism.”

The second control system encompassed announced and unannounced class visits and subject meetings. The findings with regard to the foregoing revealed that this principal’s two control systems were not contradictory to the system postulated in the literature chapter in this dissertation, but fairly advanced the control system. It is also imperative to note that this school principal indicated that monitoring educator’s work included checking lesson plan preparations and facilitation of moderation. It is in this vein of argument that the emerging control systems from data collected are viewed as having the potential of transforming schools into organisations where school managers would be perfectly positioned to control the implementation of CASS in their schools by ensuring that educators adhere to assessment guidelines.

4.2.4 Resources indispensable for the implementation of CASS.

The findings in this study explain that the issue of human, financial and teaching resources is indispensable to the implementation of CASS in schools. This is the critical new leadership or management role added to the five traditional roles highlighted in the literature review chapter. This was revealed when the school managers were asked whether they head departments in their schools. Four out of five school principals indicated that they head departments in addition to their school management role because of the shortage of head of departments in their schools. Amidst the crisis of the shortage of HoDs in schools, one school principal indicated that she has “functional” heads of departments to run departments though they were not recognised by the Department of Education.

Another issue that emerged from the findings with respect to the resources was that some school principals were reluctant to provide educators with teaching resources. The following response by a deputy school principal reiterates this:

“So I think support, support is very important because other principals are not supporting their educators they just say come along with strategies, you see. If an educator might be asking for maybe vinegar to perform an experiment at the school the principal will simply say you have vinegar at home and the vinegar at home is suppose not to be used at the school.”

The lack of human, financial, and teaching resources poses a serious problem to school managers and educators and impacts negatively on their roles in the implementation of CASS. The provision of resources (financial and teaching) is the collective responsibility of the school managers and this role, if performed, will enable educators to successfully implement CASS.

4.2.5 Challenges encountered in the implementation of CASS.

From the data collected in this study, it became apparent that most of the challenges encountered by the school managers and their subordinates resonate with the contemporary literature on this subject. Most of these challenges were congruent with those mentioned in Chapter Two of this study. The critical challenges identified by the respondents in this study encompass teacher

workload and teacher-learner ratio. One deputy principal reported:

“Workload and then teacher-learner ratio, um, I think there is no class which has less than 70 learners. So it means that teachers are overloaded. Like myself I was talking with one curriculum advisor that came to our school and he then discovered that I am teaching grade ten which has got about 139 learners in two classes but all in all if you can just separate them they give you about three classes. And I also teach life sciences in grade 11 there are 78, it can give two classes. So being the deputy principals and having to look after the smooth running of the school and going to class, it is a lot of work.”

The school managers also indicated other challenges such as absenteeism, learners’ disciplinary problems, and learners’ attitude towards education, learners’ language barriers, late supply of pacesetters by the district office, insufficient resources, and limited curriculum services as a result of lack of the curriculum advisors particularly for Mathematics and Accounting in the district, the lack of adequate training, and the high illiteracy levels of parents. In addition, the school managers revealed that other than the core challenges mentioned above, there were those associated with the educators. These included the fact that educators did not cover the required scope of work, had a negative attitude towards the CASS policy, and they were poor in the formulation of questions. The study also reveals what could be the reason for not covering certain aspects of the scope. The head of the science department in one school revealed this fact as follows:

“Um, the challenges is that some of the topics, especially in my department they are new topics. You find that the teacher is not well conversant with such a topic, and they have to go through it, he has to teach it and if not trained well and workshopped, he end up not doing that topic, then it affect CASS then.”

During the interview process, one problem that appeared to be unique to rurally located districts such as Mopani emerged; namely, the challenge relating to the problem of what is referred to as “children-parents”. The view of one participant with regard to this was:

“We have a big problem of absenteeism and when you try to find out why learners are not coming, you will be told that they are running their families, parents are not around, learners are the ones who are looking after their young ones [siblings], therefore they end up not coming to school, that is why sometimes we have a lot of learners missing some tasks, you see.”

Another respondent testified to this as she stated:

“In the implementation of CASS especially in secondary school, we have a problem of absenteeism. Some of the tasks are not written maybe in their correct dates as planned because during that day it maybe the grand parent or our learners who have babies receive grants from the government they go to the pay points and the test will not be written by all learners, but only few.”

One critical challenge which transpired to be resulting from the lack of training was the inability by the educators to formulate questions. This problem is further exacerbated by the fact that educators cannot develop various assessment tasks and their instruments, such as investigations, projects, and their rubrics. One school principal pointed out that:

“As I have indicated early, I said the serious challenge is when coming to the setting of questions because that’s where you will check as to whether the learner is grasping the learning under those outcomes and if the question is not addressing the outcomes definitely things will not go as per policy. But if future workshop can be or maybe the focus of future workshop they address this issue because in my opinion teaching is what we are doing everyday but the real issue is how to set questions which will address curricular or NCS.”

4.2.6 Intervention or turn-around strategies

The findings with regard to the intervention or turn-around strategies encompassed some human resource management functions, such as adequately training, supporting, and motivation of educators. A most seemingly successful school principal stated:

“At first I think, whatever we want to do we should start off with the attitude of the teacher, you need to get people together, and you need to get motivational speakers, you need to get practitioners, not guys coming externally, guys that have been standing, have been involved in the war, in the classroom, knowing these problems, people that have gone through the ranks, and use experts when you have workshops. Get people together and first change the attitudes.”

He reiterated that the use of expert practitioners is vitally important to turn-around the status of

CASS in schools in Mopani District. The rationale for using experts is basic to what he said:

“... you get that person to be involved in the workshop. And those are the ones who can answer questions, once with proven results, if you want to know something of golf, you take Tiger Woods if possible that will be the best person to analyse it, tell the secret of good golf.”

With regard to motivation and the attitude of educators he indicated:

“You need to understand that teaching is a profession, and as much as the doctors shall not leave a starving patient when looking at the watch, and say ok, guys is now eight o’clock, this man can die, I am holding the lives of kids in my hands, and so does the teachers.”

The findings also revealed that improved planning at all levels of curriculum support services could turn things around. Other turn-around strategies mentioned coincide with the fact that this study postulates that the school managers’ engagement in various roles suggested could help address challenges associated with the implementation of CASS. These strategies included ensuring parent participation, resource provisioning, adequate support particularly from school principals, and learner motivation. The policy issue emerging as a strategy involves adding more controlled tests to the assessment programme in order to fully prepare learners for the final year examination.

4.2.7 Aspects for future trainings or workshops

The data collected showed that school managers and their subordinates are challenged in different ways by the new assessment policy. All the school managers concurred that engagement with assessment policy or guidelines was urgently needed in order to reverse the dire status of CASS in their schools. Some school managers who were teaching scarce-skills subjects such as Mathematics and Physical Sciences noted that future training should include content training as new content had been incorporated into the FET programmes. Other aspects of equal importance emerging from the findings included lesson planning and procedures in moderation.

The school managers accentuated that the future workshops should also address aspects relating

to assessment tasks, as one participant mentioned:

“Ah, I think If, when they do workshop or training they must involve things like assessment tasks like researches, they must help educators to develop a research project or practical investigation, how to set a rubric or how to develop a rubric because this is where problem lies, we don’t know what is rubric, how can you set a research project.”

4.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA

After the collection of the raw data, the data were then tabulated in a data sheet using the coded values. The data sheet was constructed on a spreadsheet. The main statistical methods used to analyse the data were frequency distribution tables and cross-tabulation. Based on the 70 questionnaires returned from a sample of 96 members of the SMTs and 80 from a sample of 96 educators, the following frequency tables were used to illustrate the overall responses of SMTs and educators. I also used cross-tabulation to compare the responses of the SMTs.

4.3.1 Responses from SMTs and educators

Table 4.1 represents the number and percentages of responses of completed data from the 70 questionnaires returned by the school management teams (SMTs) and 80 questionnaires returned by educators.

Table 4.1 Frequency distribution for SMT and educators who completed and returned the questionnaires

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Principal	16	10.7%
Deputy Principal	15	10%
Head of Department	39	26%
Educator	80	53.3%
Total	150	100.0%

Table 4.1 shows that 53.3% of the educators completed and returned the questionnaires

compared to 46.7% of the school managers, of which half (26%) of these school managers were Heads of Departments.

4.3.2 Biographical responses from the SMTs and educators

a) The gender of the SMT and Educators

Table 4.2 reveals that more than half (56%) of the respondents who participated in this study were males, while only 44% of the respondents were females. The majority (28.7%) of the females who completed and returned the questionnaires were educators.

Table 4.2 Frequency distribution: Gender (SMT and Educators)

Category	Female	Male	Female	Male
	Frequency		Percentage	
Principal	4	12	2.7%	8%
Deputy Principal	7	8	4.6%	5.3%
Head of Department	12	27	8%	18%
Educator	43	37	28.7%	24.7%
Total	66	84	44%	56%
	150		100%	

b) Frequency distribution: Age of the SMTs and Educators

According to Table 4.3, 30.7% of the educators and 24.7% of the school managers were between 36 – 45 years old. About 18% of the school managers and 6% of the educators were between 46 – 55 years old. Table 4.3 also indicates that 14% of the educators and 2% of the school managers represented the respondents' age as 26 – 35 years while only 2% of the school managers and 0% of the educators were in the oldest category (55 + years old). It is also clear that no school manager belonged to the youngest age group of between 20 – 25 years old while

only 2.6% of the educators belonged to this age group.

Table 4.3 Frequency distribution: Age of the respondents (SMT and Educators)

Category	20 – 25 yrs	26 – 35 yrs	36 – 45 yrs	46 – 55 yrs	55 + yrs	20 – 25 yrs	26 – 35 yrs	36 – 45 yrs	46 – 55 yrs	55 + yrs
	Frequency					Percentage				
School Managers	0	3	37	27	3	0%	2%	24.7	18%	2%
Educator	4	21	46	9	0	2.6	14	30.7	6%	0%
Total	4	24	83	36	3	2.6%	16%	55.4	24%	2%
	150				100%					

c) Workload of school managers and educators

In an effort to determine whether the distribution of periods in schools allowed the school managers to manage effectively, the school managers and educators were asked to indicate the total number of periods they were teaching per week. Table 4.4 shows that of the total population, 18% of the school managers and only 3.3% of the educators revealed that they were teaching between 0 – 15 periods per week. At least 16% of school managers and 10% of educators taught between 16 – 25 periods per week. Of the entire sample, 28.7% of the educators and 9.3% of the school managers indicated that they were teaching between 26 – 35 periods per week. It is also clear from Table 4.4 that at least 2.7% of the school managers and 11.3% of the educators appeared to be overloaded with 36 + periods per week. Although the provisions of PAM also outline that the time allocated for teaching in respect of different post levels should differ according to the size of the school, it could be argued that the acceptable number of periods for school managers per week is between 0 and 15 periods. This will allow them enough time to focus on performing the roles postulated in this study instead of spending much of their time inside the classrooms.

Table 4.4 Frequency distribution: Workload (SMTs and Educators)

Category	0 – 15 Periods	16 – 25 Periods	26 – 35 Periods	36 + Periods	0 – 15 Periods	16 – 25 Periods	26 – 35 Periods	36 + Periods
	Frequency				Percentage			
School Managers	27	25	14	4	18%	16.7%	9.3%	2.7%
Educator	5	15	43	17	3.3	10%	28.7%	11.3%
	32	40	57	21	21.3%	26.7%	38%	14%
Total	150				100%			

d) Frequency distribution: Teaching experience

Table 4.5 suggests that most (32.6%) of the educators who participated in this study were novices with between 0 and 10 years teaching experience while fewer (3.3%) of the educators were veterans with 21+ years of teaching experience. The findings necessitate that school managers focus on the monitoring and support role to ensure that educators who are new in the work place are well prepared to implement the CASS policy. In addition, it emerged that none (0%) of the school managers in the study had teaching experience of between 0 – 5 years, while the majority of the school managers (43.4%) had been in the teaching profession for more than eleven years (Mean: 3.8%). Considering these findings, majority of the school managers are well positioned to use their experiences to inculcate in educators values and work ethics essential in the management of the curriculum change.

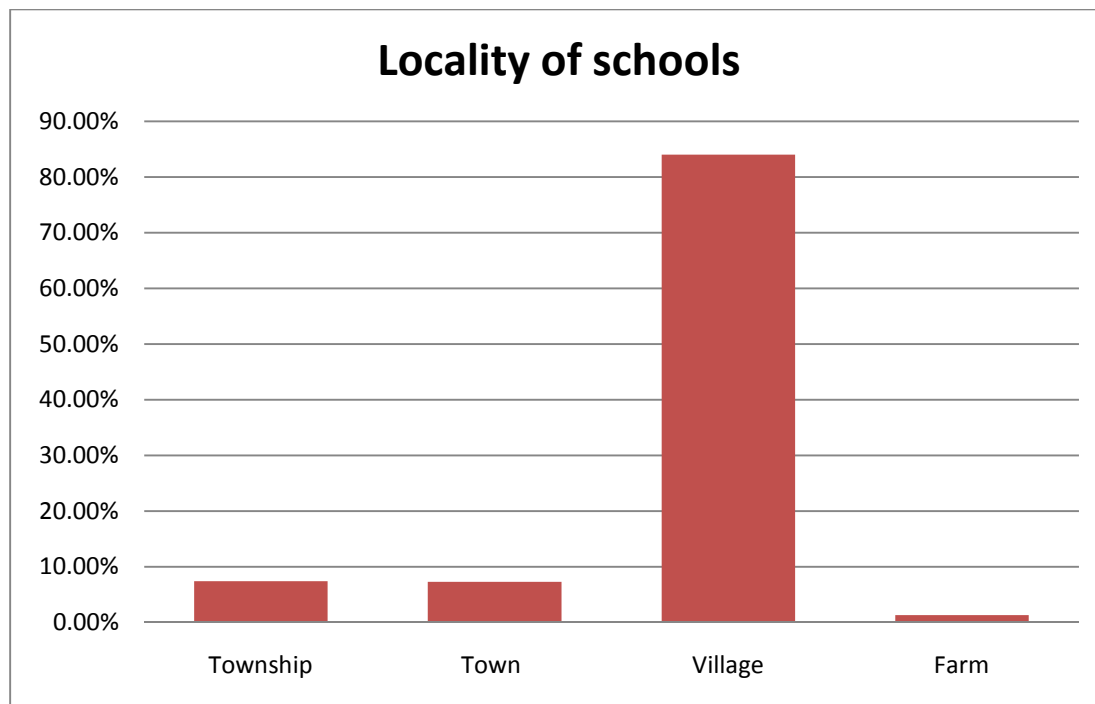
Table 4.5 Frequency distribution: Teaching experience

Category	0 – 5 yrs	6 – 10 yrs	11 –15 yrs	16 –20 yrs	21 + yrs	0 – 5 yrs	6 – 10 yrs	11 –15 yrs	16 – 20 yrs	21 + yrs
	Frequency					Percentage				
School Managers	0	5	19	27	19	0%	3.3%	12.7%	18%	12.7%
Educator	26	23	10	16	5	17.3%	15.3%	6.7%	10.7%	3.3%
Total	26	28	29	43	24	17.3%	18.6%	19.4%	28.7%	16%
	150				100%					

e) Frequency distribution: Locality of schools

When trying to establish the locality of the schools, it emerged (Figure 4.1) that the significant majority (84%) indicated that they were teaching in village schools, while fewer (1.3%) of the participants stated that they were teaching in farm schools. Finally, it was found that an equal number of respondents (7%) taught in township and town schools. Obviously, there are more schools in villages than are in farms, in towns or townships, which make the provision of resources a critical aspect of the support role of school managers in the implementation of CASS. It could also mean that a programme of parent involvement is crucial to attract parents from the villages to participate in the education of their children and cooperate with the school in the effort to educate learners. It could be arguably so because it is in the villages where you find schools with limited resources and a high illiteracy level of parents as revealed by the qualitative data analysis (Sections 4.2.3, 4.2.4).

Figure 4.1 Bar graph - Frequency distribution: Locality of schools



f) Training of school managers and educators

There are no substantial differences between quantitative and qualitative data findings with regard to training. The findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data show that even though training is vital for the implementation of CASS, the Department of Education failed to provide adequate training for educators and school managers (Section 4.2.2). This finding is confirmed by Table 4.6 which shows that most of the school managers and educators either received CASS training once (25.4%) or twice (21.3%). As stated earlier, the paucity of training has a harsh impact on the implementation of CASS in schools. The inadequacy of CASS training could lead to school managers attaching different interpretations to CASS guidelines, which may further lead to different schools implementing different CASS policies (Section 4.2.2). On the other hand, more (13.3%) school managers received more (four or more) CASS training sessions compared to a low (6%) number of educators and more educators either received no (14.7%) or one (16.7%) training on CASS. The findings with regard to the foregoing accentuate the importance of school-based workshops or in-service training for the educators.

Table 4.6 Frequency distribution: Training (SMTs and Educators)

Category	0	1	2	3	4 +	0	1	2	3	4 +
	Frequency					Percentage				
School Managers	3	13	18	16	20	2%	8.7%	12%	10.7%	13.3%
Educators	22	25	14	10	9	14.7%	16.7%	9.3%	6.7%	6%
Total	25	38	32	26	29	16.6%	25.4%	21.3%	17.4%	19.3%
	150					100%				

4.3.3 Knowledge of the theory and practice of CASS.

According to Table 4.7, of the total population, 4.3% of the school managers neither agreed nor disagreed with the fact that knowledge is a key to the successful implementation of CASS in schools, and a significant majority (95.70%) agreed that knowledge is a crucial factor in the implementation of CASS. Table 4.7 shows that a higher percentage (Mean: 4.4%) of school managers agreed that to ensure success in the implementation of CASS in their schools, knowledge of the relevant legislative framework informing the implementation of CASS, knowledge to differentiate between norm-referenced and criteria-referenced assessments, knowledge of the principles of credibility of assessment, knowledge of the historical and philosophical background of continuous assessment, and knowledge of methods and modes of CASS are crucial. This finding necessitates change in the catastrophically cascading of training programmes in which school managers are immersed. The salient point I argue, is that there is a need for a fully fledged training programme that will stretch for quite a while in order to address different facets of CASS knowledge. This shows that the issue of a lack of training discussed in 4.3.2 (f) is a huge problem impeding the implementation of CASS in schools.

Table 4.7 Frequency distribution: Knowledge of CASS (SMTs)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree (1)	0	0%
Tend to disagree (2)	0	0%
Neither agree nor disagree (3)	3	4.3%
Tend to agree (4)	31	44.3%
Strongly agree (5)	36	51.4%
Total	70	100%

4.3.4 Perception of the school managers' new roles in the implementation of CASS in a school environment

- a) How would you rate the following aspects of your new role in the implementation of continuous assessment policy in your school?

In an effort to determine the perception of the school managers, school managers were required to rank how they were providing instructional leadership, creating a good school structure, creating a positive school climate, managing parent involvement, managing learners, motivating, monitoring, and supporting educators. The results from this study (Table 4.8) revealed that a significantly smaller percentage (18.6%) of the school managers showed that they regarded their performance of the above activities as fairly poor as opposed to 81.4% who stated that they perceive their performance of these activities as good.

Table 4.8 Frequency distribution: The status of management aspects.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very poor	0	0%
Fairly poor	13	18.6%
Fairly good	30	42.8%
Very good	27	38.6%
Total	70	100%

In contrast, slightly divergent opinions were found between the perceptions of school managers and educators on aspects such as school climate and culture, school support, parent participation, learners' discipline, monitoring systems, motivation, and conflict resolution approaches in their schools. Table 4.9 represents the results from the educators' survey, which shows that most (58.7%) of the educators stated that school climate, culture, support, monitoring system, and motivation in their schools were rather fair, contrary to the findings in the SMTs' survey which indicated that most managers were fairly happy with these aspects. However, there is a numerical bias to these figures. The overwhelming majority (91.3%) showed satisfaction with aspects such as climates, culture, and support. It is important to recall that a larger proportion of the educators completed and returned the questionnaires than school managers.

Table 4.9 Frequency distribution: Rating of the management aspects by educators

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	7	8.7%
Fair	47	58.7%
Good	17	21.3%
Excellent	9	11.3%
Total	80	100%

b) How would you rate the following aspects of your role in the implementation of CASS policy in your school?

In order to establish how school managers embraced issues or aspects that create a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of CASS, school managers were asked to rate issues which encompassed parent-teacher partnerships, learners' discipline, school culture, staff motivation, instructional management, and so on. Table 4.10 indicates that there is a higher level of satisfaction (74.3%) among school managers regarding issues that create a favourable atmosphere for CASS implementation in schools, opposed to 25.7% of those who indicated that they were dissatisfied (Table 4.10). Table 4.10 further shows that virtually no school manager was very dissatisfied with the status of CASS and CASS implementation in his or her school, since only 1.4% of the sample indicated that they were very dissatisfied.

Table 4.10 Frequency distribution: Rating of management aspects by managers

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	8	11.4
Fairly satisfied	44	62.9
Fairly dissatisfied	17	24.3
Very dissatisfied	1	1.4
Total	70	100%

c) How often do you perform the following functions?

In an effort to establish how often the school managers performed activities or functions such as conducting school-based moderation, class visits, subject meetings, parents meetings, and management of representative council of learners' meetings, the responses of school managers in Table 4.11 show that most (44.3%) of them rarely engaged in these management activities while 38.6% indicated that they sometimes performed these activities. Although according to the findings, virtually all (98.6%) school managers were performing these tasks or activities in their schools, it is also saddening to learn that only a few (15.7%) school managers conducted them on a regular basis given the dire status of CASS in the district and country. It is worth noting that a small percentage (1.4%) of the sample of school managers never performed these activities in their schools, and this brings hope that improvement could soon be realised.

The results from the educator survey (Table 4.12) are congruent with the findings in Table 4.11. When educators were asked to indicate the frequency of moderation, departmental and subject meetings, class visits, induction, and one-on-one conferencing, the majority (93.75%) of the total population revealed that their managers performed these functions, either on rare occasions, sometimes or frequently. However, it is a cause for concern to learn that a small percentage (14%) revealed that the school managers often performed these activities in their schools.

Table 4.11 Frequency distribution: Frequency of management functions

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Never (1)	1	1.4%
Rarely (2)	31	44.3%
Sometimes (3)	27	38.6%
Often (4)	11	15.7%
Total	70	100%

Table 4.12 Frequency distribution: Frequency of management functions

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Never (1)	5	6.25
Rarely (2)	35	43.75
Sometimes (3)	29	36.25
Often (4)	11	13.75
Total	80	100%

4.4 CODING OF OPEN ENDED DATA

Section D of the questionnaires consisted of the verbatim responses to open-ended questions. The open-ended data were obtained and then coded for easy analysis. The information was quantified by developing code categories. A number was then assigned to the initial code. The following tables report on the open-ended data obtained through the two separate questionnaires.

4.4.1 Challenges/problems experienced by educators and school managers in the implementation of CASS

It emerged (Table 4.13) that some of the problems or challenges confronting the school managers and their subordinate educators which perfectly concurred with the literature review encompassed inadequate support system (29.3%), learners' disciplinary problems (20.9%), heavy workload (15.1%), and overcrowded classrooms (13.7%). Of the total population, 11.7%

of the sample of school managers mentioned that they were challenged by issues relating to CASS policies and guidelines. It is worth noting that only a few (4.4%) school managers mentioned their inability to formulate assessment tasks (projects and investigations) and their instruments (rubrics) as posing a huge challenge to their endeavour to implement CASS. There is a clear concern among school managers about an increased lack of support, learners' disciplinary problems, teacher workload and policy related issues.

Although the Minister of Education, Angie Motshega, has introduced a policy lever to address the issue of workloads, other facets such as overcrowded classrooms and disciplinary problems of learners in schools, which are related to a *qualitative* interpretation of the section "challenges" (Section 4.2.5) are yet to be addressed, most particularly in rural schools.

Table 4.13 Challenges encountered in the implementation of CASS

1. Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.1. Issues relating to CASS policies	24	11.7%
1.2. Teacher workload	31	15.1%
1.3. Overcrowded classrooms	28	13.7%
1.4. Learners and learners disciplinary problems	43	20.9%
1.5. Lack of support	60	29.3%
1.6. Problems relating to assessment tasks	9	4.4%
1.7. Lack of planning	10	4.9%
TOTAL	205	100 %

4.4.2 How to address challenges and problems impeding the implementation of CASS in schools in Mopani District, especially dysfunctional school

Table 4.14 reveals that a large proportion (61.9%) of the school managers indicated that an efficient support system was needed in order to turn around the status of the implementation of CASS in schools. This support system should encompass aspects such as the provision of workshops or in-service training, and making available teaching and learning resources. Of the

entire population, 15.8% of the respondents mentioned that a policy review which may include the addition of tests to the assessment programme could address the challenges while 10.9% felt that the involvement of the parents could move CASS in the right direction.

Table 4.14 Intervention or turn-around strategies

1. Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.1. Adequate support	89	61.9%
1.2. Intensive Monitoring	12	8.2%
1.3. Stakeholders' Involvement	16	10.9%
1.4. Policy Review	23	15.8%
1.5. Proper Planning	6	4.1%
TOTAL	146	100%

With respect to CASS training, Table 4.15 shows that the majority (42.3%) of the school managers in the sample stated that they would consider future training fruitful if it addressed issues relating to CASS policies or guidelines while 34% mentioned that future trainings should be able to enhance their skills in the construction of tasks and the formulation of questions. It is worth to note that 14.4% indicated that they should be trained on how to engage in the three phases of planning, particularly how to develop their own lesson plans without extracting them from textbooks as this inhibits creativity on their part.

Table 4.15 Aspects to be addressed in the future training programmes or workshops

2. Category of training aspects	Frequency	Percentage
2.1. Engagement with Policy Documents	41	42.3%
2.2. Development of assessment tasks	33	34.0%
2.3. Procedures in School-Based Moderation	5	5.2%
2.4. Recording and Reporting Procedures	4	4.1%
2.5. Planning	14	14.4%
TOTAL	97	100%

4.5 CROSS TABULATION

4.5.1 Is the frequency of management functions in CASS dependent on the manager's knowledge of CASS?

The following section deals with knowledge and its relation to the frequency of management functions or activities such as moderation and class visits. In this section I report on the percentage of the school managers who as a result of their perception of the significance of knowledge either performed or never performed these activities in their schools.

Table 4.16 Relationship between frequency of management functions and knowledge

		Frequency of management functions				
Knowledge		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
Strongly disagree	Count					
	%					
Tend to disagree	Count					
	%					
Neither agree nor disagree	Count		2		1	3
	%		66.7%		33.3%	100%
Tend to agree	Count		15	13	5	33
	%		45.5%	39.4%	15.1%	100%
Strongly agree	Count	2	13	14	5	34
	%	5.9%	38.2%	41.2%	14.7%	100%
Total	Count	2	30	27	11	70
	%	2.9%	42.9%	38.5%	15.7	100%

The respondents were asked to comment on the frequency of activities such as moderation; departmental and subject meetings in their schools. The results from the survey showed that the majority (41.2%) of school managers in the sample who strongly agreed that knowledge is

critical in the implementation of CASS stated that they sometimes performed these activities, 38.2% of them rarely performed these activities, 14.7% often performed the activities in their schools, while only a few (5.9%) of the school managers stated that they never performed moderation, or conduct departmental and subject meetings in their schools. Most of the school managers (66.7%) of those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the significance of knowledge indicated that they rarely performed these activities in their schools while 33.3% mentioned that they performed them regularly. The results also show that about 45.5% of the school managers, who appeared to be agreeing that knowledge is important in the implementation of CASS, rarely engaged in these activities, 39.4% sometimes engaged in the functions while a small percentage (15.1%) often performed these important activities in their schools.

The school managers who neither agreed nor disagreed with the significance of knowledge in the implementation of CASS were mostly individuals who rarely moderated educators' work, conducted subject meetings and class visits, and held parents' meetings. Those who strongly agreed that knowledge is critical occasionally performed the activities in their schools. In an effort to determine the relationship between knowledge and the frequency of executing management functions or activities, the responses of the school managers who often conducted the said activities were compared with those of who strongly valued the importance of knowledge in the implementation of CASS. They could not establish any clear relationship between the perception of knowledge and the frequency of executing management functions or activities in schools.

4.5.2 Does the teaching experience of school managers have an influence on how school managers perceive of the different aspects of their role in the implementation of CASS in their schools such as providing instructional leadership, the management of parent involvement, and dealing with learners' disciplinary problems?

The relationship between teaching experience and the school managers' perception of aspects of their roles such as providing instructional leadership, the creation of a positive school climate, management of learners, and management of parent involvement is represented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Teaching experience and perception of management functions or activities

		Perception				
Teaching Experience		Very poor	Fairly poor	Fairly good	Very good	Total
0 – 5 yrs	Count					
	%					
6 – 10 yrs	Count		1	2	4	7
	%		14.3%	28.6%	57.1%	100%
11 – 15 yrs	Count		4	6	7	17
	%		23.5%	35.3%	41.2%	100%
16 – 20 yrs	Count		5	18	6	29
	%		17.2%	62.1%	20.7%	100%
21 + yrs	Count		3	7	7	17
	%		17.6%	41.2%	41.2%	100%
Total	Count		13	33	24	70
	%		18.6%	47.1%	34.3%	100%

Table 4.17 indicates that 57.1% of school managers with between 6 – 10 years teaching experience are more likely to perceive their performance of management roles or activities in their schools as very good, 28.6% of them regarded it as fairly good, and less than a quarter of the sample said that their performance of these roles was fairly poor. About 41.2% (See Table 4.17) with teaching experience of between 11 – 15 years regarded their performance of these activities as very good, 35.3% as fairly good, and while 23.5% as fairly poor. An average of 62.1% of managers who had 16 – 20 years experience in the field indicated that they perceived their performance in these activities as being fairly good, 20.7% regarded it as very good, while 17.2% perceived their performance as being fairly poor. An equal percentage (41.2%) of the school managers with 21 + years teaching experience mentioned that their performance of activities such as motivation, support, and monitoring was very good and fairly good respectively, while only 17.6% perceived their engagement as being fairly poor.

From these findings it is evident that the school managers with little or more teaching experience are more likely to perceive aspects such as providing instructional leadership and technical support, and managing parents' involvement in their schools as being very good. In the case of the younger school managers (between 6 – 10 years teaching experience) this could be because of the work-related enthusiasm that is usually found among new entries. Also, school managers who have taught for more than twenty years might have been devoted and dedicated to the teaching profession all their lives and are determined to contribute positively to the profession until their last breath.

4.5.3 Are female managers more satisfied with the issues pertaining to their roles that create a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of CASS such as parent-teacher partnerships, the state of learners' discipline, and the staff motivation in their schools than male school managers?

A significantly smaller percentage of male school managers (10.9%) were very satisfied with their parent-teacher participation, the state of the learners' discipline, the staff motivation, and the parent-teacher partnership compared to 12.5% of female managers (See Table 4.18). The table also shows a substantial difference between females and males with a higher percentage of male managers (63.0%) being fairly satisfied with management or leadership issues that promote conditions conducive for the implementation of CASS, as opposed to 58.3% of the female managers. In drawing a conclusion from the calculated percentages, the results show that there is no significant difference in the satisfaction levels of female and male school managers with regard to aspects that create a favourable atmosphere for the implementation of CASS in schools.

Table 4.18 Gender and issues of management roles in implementation of CASS

		Management issues/activities				
Gender		Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Total
Female	Count	3	14	6	1	24
	%	12.5%	58.3%	25%	4.2%	100 %
Male	Count	5	29	12		46
	%	10.9%	63.0%	26.1%		100 %
Total	Count	8	43	18	1	70
	%	11.4%	61.5%	25.7%	1.4%	100 %

4.5.4 Do females and males differ in their perception of the aspects of their roles such as providing instructional leadership and the creation of good culture and climate in the implementation of CASS?

In an effort to determine the relationship between gender and the perception of the aspects of school managers' new role in the implementation of CASS, the responses of school managers were compared in Table 4.19. It emerged that of the total number of respondents, 62.5% female managers indicated that they perceived these aspects as fairly good, 20.8% as being very good, while 16.7% said that they regarded these aspects as being fairly poor. Of the total male managers, 41.3% perceived these aspects as very good, 39.1% as fairly good, while only 19.6% saw them as fairly poor. From the data collected it emerged that a slightly higher percentage of the female managers perceived the aspects of their role as good than male managers. At least 90.5% of the female managers indicated that they were satisfied with their performance of the said functions. This could mean that female managers are more able to provide instructional leadership, create a good school structure and culture, create a positive school climate, manage parent involvement, motivate, support, and monitor educators, and resolve conflicts in the school environment than male managers.

Table 4.19 Gender and perception of the aspects of management roles in the implementation of CASS

		Perception on the new role in CASS implementation				
Gender		Very poor	Fairly poor	Fairly good	Very good	Total
Female	Count		4	15	5	24
	%		16.7%	62.5%	20.8%	100 %
Male	Count		9	18	19	46
	%		19.6%	39.1%	41.3%	100 %
Total	Count		13	33	24	70
	%		18.6 %	47.1 %	34.3 %	100 %

4.5.5 Does the workload of school managers affect the frequency of their management functions in relation to the implementation of continuous assessment?

Workload is a crucial aspect that affects the management or leadership roles in any school. Questions on the number of teaching periods spent by school managers per week provided more insight into the relationship that exists between workload and the frequency of management functions such as moderations, conducting class visits, and monitoring and supporting staff. Table 4.20 reveals that a significantly higher proportion of those who teach 36 and more periods per week (75%) occasionally performed management functions, while 25% said that they rarely engaged in these functions in their schools. It is noteworthy that at least 40.7% of the school managers in the sample who spent less than 15 periods of teaching per week indicated that they rarely performed the management functions such as moderation and organising subject meetings, 29.9% stated that they sometimes engaged in these functions, 25.9% often performed these functions, while only a small percentage of them (3.8%) indicated that they never performed these functions. These findings reveal that the lower the number of periods the school manager was teaching per week the better the chance of him or her performing the moderation of teachers' work, conduct subject meetings and class visits, and invite parents to school. It is

evident that despite the huge number of periods that majority of the school managers were teaching per week, they did not completely abandon these functions in their schools as they indicated that they occasionally perform them.

Table 4.20 Workload and frequency of management functions performed by SMTs

Workload (Periods)		Frequency of management functions				Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	
0 – 15 periods	Count	1	11	8	7	27
	%	3.8%	40.7%	29.6%	25.9%	100 %
16 – 25 periods	Count	1	11	9	4	25
	%	4.0%	44.0%	36.0%	16.0%	100 %
26 – 35 periods	Count		7	7		14
	%		50%	50%		100 %
36+ periods	Count		1	3		4
	%		25%	75%		100 %
Total	Count	2	30	27	11	70
	%	2.9%	42.8%	38.6%	15.7%	100 %

4.5.6 Does school managers’ post level influence the manner in which they perceive of the aspects of their role in the implementation of CASS in their schools?

In order to determine the relationship between post level and how school managers perceive aspects of their roles such as providing instructional leadership, the creation of a positive school climate, the management of parent involvement, dealing with learners’ disciplinary problems, motivation of educators, monitoring of educators, and providing technical support, the responses of school managers who either considered these aspects as very good, fairly good, fairly poor or very poor were compared with those of school managers who were either in post level 2, 3 or 4. Table 4.21 reveals that of the sample used, most of the heads of departments (42.1%) regarded their engagement in these activities as either very good or fairly good, while less than a quarter of the respondents (15.8%) stated that they perceived these activities as fairly poor. In addition,

56.3% of the deputy principals indicated that these activities in their schools were done fairly well, 25% very well, and 18.7% regarded them as done fairly poorly. More than half (56%) of the school principals regarded their performance of these activities as being fairly good, 25% fairly poor, while 18.7% perceived them as very good.

It emerged from these data that the majority of heads of departments regarded the aspects of their role such as providing instructional leadership, the creation of a positive school climate, the management of parents' involvement, dealing with learners' disciplinary issues, motivating, monitoring and supporting teachers, and managing conflict in their school as being at acceptable standards or very good.

Table 4.21 Perception and post level of school managers

		Attitude				
Post Level		Very poor	Fairly poor	Fairly good	Very good	Total
Post level 2 (HoD)	Count		6	16	16	38
	%		15.8%	42.1%	42.1%	100%
Post Level 3 (Deputy principal)	Count		3	9	4	16
	%		18.7%	56.3%	25%	100%
Post Level 4 (Principal)	Count		4	9	3	16
	%		25%	56.3%	18.7%	100%
Total	Count		13	34	23	70
	%		18.6%	48.6%	32.8%	100%

4.5.7 Does training have an effect on the frequency of management functions with respect to implementation continuous assessment?

According to an illustration in Table 4.22, significantly more than 70% of the school managers who had never attended any training on CASS mentioned that they rarely performed the management functions in their schools, while less than 3% indicated that they sometimes

performed these functions, while at least 12.5% often performed them. The significant majority (87%) of those who had attended one training programme reported that they sometimes performed the functions, and 12.5% said that they rarely performed them. In addition, 33.3% of those who had had two trainings reported that they rarely performed the functions, 33.3% sometimes, 27.8% often engaged in these functions, while only 5.6% never performed them. A half (50%) of those who had attended three training programmes indicated that they rarely performed management functions, 31.3% sometimes performed them, and 18.7% often performed them. About 45% of the school managers who had attended four workshops stated that they rarely performed these functions in their schools, 40% performed them sometimes, 10% often, and only 5% never performed them. Based on the findings in Table 4.22, it is hard to establish if any significant relationship exist between training and the frequency of performing management functions in schools.

Table 4.22 Training and frequency of management functions of the SMTs

		Frequency of management functions				
Training		Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Total
0	Count		6	1	1	8
	%		75%	12.5%	12.5%	100%
1	Count		1	7		8
	%		12.5%	87.5%		100%
2	Count	1	6	6	5	18
	%	5.6%	33.3%	33.3%	27.8%	100%
3	Count		8	5	3	16
	%		50%	31.3%	18.7%	100%
4 +	Count	1	9	8	2	20
	%	5%	45%	40%	10%	100%
Total	Count	2	30	27	11	70
	%	2.9%	42.9%	38.5%	15.7%	100%

4.5.8 Does the locality of the school impact on the satisfaction of school managers with their management issues or activities relating to the implementation of CASS?

Table 4.23 illustrates that 42.9% of the school managers teaching in township schools were very satisfied with management issues creating a conducive atmosphere such as parent-teacher partnership and the state of learners' discipline. Of the total population of school managers from township schools, 57.1% were fairly satisfied and 42.9 were very satisfied with management issues or activities. Of the managers from town schools, 60% were very satisfied with these aspects and 40% were fairly satisfied. Most (64.3%) of the school managers from village school were fairly satisfied, 30.3% were fairly dissatisfied, 3.6% are very satisfied, and 1.8% were very dissatisfied. One half (50%) of the managers from farm schools was fairly satisfied while another half (50%) was fairly dissatisfied with aspects of management in their schools. The findings clearly reveal that school managers teaching in town schools are more satisfied with issues of management while school managers in farm and village schools are the least satisfied.

Table 4.23 Locality of the school and management issues/activities

Locality of schools		Management issues/activities				Total
		Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
Township		3	4			7
		42.9%	57.1%			100%
Town		3	2			5
		60%	40%			100%
Village		2	36	17	1	56
		3.6%	64.3%	30.3%	1.8%	100%
Farm			1	1		2
			50%	50%		100%
Total		8	43	18	1	70
		11.4%	61.4%	25.8%	1.4%	100%

4.6 SUMMMARY

This chapter has focused on an analysis and interpretation of data received from the interviews with school managers (Principals, deputy principals and HoDs) and statistical analysis of the two questionnaires (for educators and school managers). It is evident from the data collected through qualitative and quantitative approaches that school managers' challenges are congruent with those in the literature chapter in this study. It is also imperative to note that the quantitative results and qualitative results revealed that school managers who attended more training sessions appeared to be better in performing the management functions such as moderation, conducting subject meetings and class visits, engaging in learners' disciplinary actions, involving parents, providing educators with technical support, and motivating staff. The school managers also suggested a few turn-around strategies which included the formation of committees (school-based, cluster), reinforce support for educators, proper planning, stakeholder involvement (parents and other key members of the community), and reviewing the CASS policy. It became evident that the perception of school managers of different aspects of their roles in the implementation of continuous assessment was influenced by factors such as training and the locality of schools. Based on the data collected and findings in this Chapter, the next Chapter presents a summary and discussion of the general findings, hence looking at the possible recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 focused mainly on the results obtained from both the quantitative and qualitative data. This chapter will identify, discuss and summarise the findings obtained, and draw conclusions from the findings. It also aims to provide answers to the following research question: *What is the role of school managers in addressing challenges associated with the implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training Band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province, and to what degree do school managers engage in performing the “traditional” leadership and management roles such as instructional leadership, the management of parent involvement, staff motivation, learners’ management, and monitoring and support?*

The conclusions drawn from the findings will further offer answers to the following research sub-questions as mentioned in Chapter 1: What are the requirements for the effective implementation of CASS in the FET Band? What are the perceptions of school managers on the CASS policy? What are the problems working against the proper implementation of CASS? Which roles do school managers play in the implementation of CASS? What training should be provided to the school managers?

The answers to the mentioned research question and sub-questions are presented by first grouping the interpreted findings thematically, and then summarising and discussing the themes under each sub-question. After the summary and discussion of the themes, recommendations will be provided. The Chapter will also provide suggestions and make recommendations for further research.

5.2 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.2.1 What are the requirements for the effective implementation of CASS in the FET band?

The aim of this section is to identify the possible requirements for the effective implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training band. Two major requirements explored include CASS training for school managers and provision of human, financial, and teaching and learning resources.

a) CASS training for school managers

On the basis of a sample of 70 school managers and 80 educators representative of public schools in 6 circuits in Mopani District, the opinions of the school managers and educators who indicated that they had never attended any CASS training or did so once, twice, three or four times and more were analysed in sections 4.3.2.6 and 4.2.2. It is evident that the Department of Education had overlooked the aspect of training prior to the introduction of the CASS policy in the FET band. In addition, the few training sessions which were offered to school managers and educators in the district were in the form of a one or two day workshop. Moreover, the training sessions which were rolled out prior to the implementation were not addressing CASS per se, but were basically dealing with the newly introduced content in various subjects.

The lack of sufficient training in the Mopani District directly affects the implementation of CASS in schools as most of the school managers and educators indicated that they were not competent in implementing the new CASS policy. The need for training is also necessitated by the fact that most novice educators revealed that they had not received any training on CASS. The foregoing could also exacerbate the myriad of frustrations of school managers as they have to provide school-based training for these new entries while they themselves had not been sufficiently prepared. In addition, the school managers were not satisfied with the competence levels of Department of Education's facilitators who appeared to be lacking in knowledge and understanding of the various facets of continuous assessment.

In attempting to summarise the key learning in this theme from management perspective, one can conclude that training is indispensable for the effective implementation of CASS in the district and the country as a whole. Therefore, it is as a result of the lack of or insufficient CASS training, that school managers indicated that they were not prepared for ensuring effective policy implementation in their schools.

b) Resource provisioning as indispensable to the implementation of CASS

Human, financial and teaching resources are indispensable for the implementation of continuous assessment in schools in Mopani District. This was evident from the findings from the collected data. The findings revealed that some schools had a serious crisis of a lack of managers, especially heads of departments. The crisis of a lack of human resources increases the workload of school principals as they have to head certain departments in addition to their functions and responsibilities. Some school principals are thus forced to appoint “functional” heads of departments to lead departments (Section 4.2.4) in their schools in an effort to relieve themselves from the unbearable workload as a result of understaffing.

Another category of resources which directly affect the implementation of continuous assessment in schools encompasses learners and teachers support materials such as computers and the internets, chemicals, and apparatus. Although only a few school managers raised a concern about the lack of this category of resources, it is imperative to note that poorly resourced schools in Mopani District continue to struggle with the implementation of a rather expensive curriculum. Since the supply of these resources depends on the school principals, it emerged that there is still some reluctance on the part of some of the school principals to supply educators with these resources. The possible explanation for this tendency could be that the majority of school principals fail to implement budgets in their schools or they are simply fraudulent. This could be so because the issue was raised by deputy principals and heads of departments who complained that educators in their departments lacked even simple resources such as vinegar to perform experiments. This poses a serious challenge to educators as assessment tasks such as projects and experiments require the use of different equipments or apparatus as well as specific

chemicals. Finally, schools in the villages are poorly resourced compared to those in towns and townships.

With regard to resources, I can conclude that lack of resource provisioning from different levels jeopardises the implementation of CASS in schools. It is evident that if this requirement is not met by the Department of Education and school principals soon enough, the success of the implementation of CASS remains a mere dream.

5.2.2 What are the perceptions of the school managers on the CASS policy?

The perception of most of school managers as delineated by the findings is that the introduction of CASS or criteria-referenced assessment had lowered the standard of education in schools (Section 4.2.1).

On the basis of the findings, one could conclude that a huge challenge that inhibits the implementation of continuous assessment in schools in Mopani District is inherent in the attitude of the implementers, particularly school managers. These perceptions of the CASS policy could be an obvious indicator for the dire status of the implementation of CASS in the district, since it is unlikely that school managers would be effective in performing roles essential for creating a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of CASS with such a negative attitude.

5.2.3 What are the problems working against the proper implementation of CASS?

It is apparent from the findings that most of the challenges encountered by the school managers and their subordinates resonate with the contemporary literature on this subject. Most of these challenges were congruent with those mentioned in Chapter 2 of this study. The critical challenges identified by the respondents in this study encompass teacher workload, teacher-learner ratio, learners' absenteeism and other disciplinary problems, learners' attitude towards education and language barriers, poor planning which include the late supply of pacesetters by the district, incomplete scope of work by educators, insufficient resources, limited curriculum support services, inability of educators to develop assessment tasks such as projects and their

assessment instrument such as rubrics, poor formulation of questions, and parents' illiteracy (Sections 4.2.5, 4.3.2.3 and 4.4.1-Table 4.15). The emerging findings support results from previous studies (Kapambwe & Mulenga, 2008:6-7), in which larger class sizes, staffing, remediation and enrichment, learners absenteeism, teaching and learning resources, teacher networking, monitoring and feedback were identified as challenges working against the implementation of CASS in schools. These challenges could be perceived as stressors and this would have a negative impact on the quality of education in South Africa since many of these school managers and educators are highly demoralised.

Another challenge in Mopani District concerns common tests. It emerged that there is no efficient time table to control the administration of these tests. This leads to different schools using different times to administer these tests, and the associated problem is the leaking of the questions memoranda from one school to another. For these reasons, it is important that the problems associated with common tests be addressed urgently before the value of these common tests is undermined by school managers and educators.

Finally, it could be concluded on the basis of the findings that, although there is an effort by the department to deal with challenges confronting the NCS as a whole, challenges impeding the implementation of CASS per se are not being given the necessary attention. A state of emergency need to be declared to deal with these enormous challenges that emerged from the data collected which reveal that the majority of school managers concurred that they are under immense pressure due to these impediments.

5.2.4 Which roles do school managers play in the implementation of CASS?

a) Management of parent involvement

This is one of the roles regarded as “traditional” leadership and management roles. There are clearly similar concerns among school managers about the involvement of parents in the activities of the schools. In investigating the impact of parents' lack of involvement, participation and cooperation, most school managers remarked that many disciplinary problems emanate from

home and the unavailability of parents means that these behavioural problems would not be detected early and rooted out. This situation could exacerbate the problem of discipline in schools since managers would embark on extreme withdrawal from taking corrective measures against learners' misconduct in isolation from the parents.

The results also show that most of the school managers were alarmed by the deteriorating state of affairs in their schools with regard to parents' participation and cooperation. They regrettably stated that parent involvement is below 50% (Section 4.2.3.1). This is due to various impediments emerging from the study such as parents' illiteracy and the fact that some learners head families or are staying with older people, some parents are unavailable, particularly those who are working on the farms while some parents were just having a negative attitude towards education. Illiteracy of most of the parents appeared to be a critical hindrance to parents' participation and cooperation in schools in the district. The schools' lack of a well-defined parent involvement programme emerged as another crucial factor in parents' lack of participation because most school managers taking part in this study indicated that they only invite parents to schools when they are experiencing disciplinary problems with learners or they are issuing quarterly progress reports. Furthermore, it emerged that almost all school managers applied parents' meetings as the only mode of communicating with parents. This could mean that most school managers may not be aware of alternative modes of communication because of a lack of management training or induction programmes in the district.

With regard to parent involvement, one could conclude that the execution of this role by school managers is below par, and their dealing with factors contributing towards the lack of parents' involvement is ineffective.

b) Support to and motivation of educators

With regard to support, most school managers indicated that departmental meetings, school-based, circuit-based and district-based workshops and discussion sessions during staff meetings are the major vehicles of support for educators in their schools. Most managers indicated that they were fairly satisfied with the manner in which this role was performed in their school (Table

4.10). However, when asked how often they performed these support activities such as conducting departmental and subject meetings, the majority indicated that they rarely engaged in these activities (Table 4.11). This correlates with the opinion of educators on this role as they also felt that these support activities were rarely performed by their school managers (Table 4.12). A lack of frequent engagement in these support activities could be the reason for numerous job frustrations for educators, most particularly the novice educators. As it was already mentioned that the majority of these novice educators had not received any training on CASS, letting them operate without a frequent support system could lead to a complete disaster.

Generally, the motivation levels of educators are low in schools. The majority of school managers who perceived the motivation levels of their subordinates as low indicated that the main causes were the challenging working conditions such as large class sizes, and stress due to policy changes in education. A lack of support could also have a direct impact on the morale of school educators. Significantly, fewer school managers reported high levels of morale for subordinates in their schools. The reason for this could be that their schools are producing good results in grade 12. It is worth noting that the same factors affecting the morale of the educators could also be affecting the morale of school managers in schools. For these reasons, school managers cannot transfer the energy they do not possess to direct the behaviour of their subordinates.

c) Learner management

The new assessment policy is fraught with learners' disciplinary problems (Section 4.2.3 (c)). More than half of the school managers in this study stated that they were experiencing a serious problem with learners' behaviour in their schools such as absenteeism and learners who deliberately missed or did not hand in assessment tasks. These findings correlate with the Western Cape Department of Education's discourse that "Learner behaviour problems have, for years, been a major concern for teachers, administrators and parents. More than ever before, teachers are faced with critical problems in their classroom, and are confronted (on a daily basis) with unacceptable learner behaviour and a threatening situation" (WCDoE, 2007:2). In fact, a relationship between educators' workload and learners' disciplinary problems was found. The

absenteeism of learners increases educators' workload in the sense that learners who miss certain tasks should be given an opportunity to write on the day they come to school, which means the educator has to set time apart to administer and mark the task.

It seemed as if there is no emergent solution to the disciplinary problems of the learners, as majority of school managers indicated that the only way to deal with this problem was to issue declaration forms to learners to complete stating reasons for missing an assessment task.

d) Monitoring of educators

Mason (2004:47-48) discourses that the School Management Team (SMT) should, among other things, monitor and support content teaching to ensure that the content for teaching and learning is in line with the assessment standards. The study found that most school managers were clueless when it came to the monitoring role they should play in their schools to ensure that educators adhere to the assessment guidelines. A lack of monitoring would have a negative impact on the implementation of CASS because unmonitored educator is like a loose cannon that could fire anywhere without a warning. Significantly, one school principal stated that "In God we trust, but on man we check" to illustrate the importance of having a clear and definite control system in place to ensure adherence to assessment guidelines.

Nevertheless, one school principal presented a twofold check system applied in his school. His check system encompassed announced and unannounced class visits as well as the quarterly checking of lesson preparation files and minutes of subject meetings. The role of the heads of departments in this control system was to conduct compulsory subject meetings where policies were discussed and later write a report about the work of educators which he or she then sent to the principal to sign. It is imperative to note that the control role is not the responsibility only of the heads of departments as it emanated from the findings, but it needs a collective effort of all members of the SMT.

The relationship between a school's success and efficient control mechanisms was established since the school of the principal above had been performing well over the past years.

5.2.5 *What training should be provided to the school managers?*

More than half of the school managers participating in the study stated that future training or workshops should address policy frameworks in which different guidelines informing the implementation of CASS should be broadly interrogated. Other aspects to be catered for in the future training include content training (engagement with the newly introduced content), lesson planning, procedures in moderation, and development of assessment tasks such as projects and investigation, and recording and reporting procedures (Sections 4.2.7 and 4.4.1). Table 4.17 also confirms that the mentioned aspects are crucial and should be addressed in the future training sessions.

With regard to the training aspects, one could conclude from the findings that school managers' perception can improve if these aspects are given consideration in future training. Obviously, incorporating these aspects into a lengthy training programme would sufficiently prepare school managers to deal with various challenges associated with the implementation of continuous assessment.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to reassert the value of continuous assessment in the district, challenges working against its implementation in the Further Education and Training band should be addressed and the role of school managers in the implementation process detailed and clarified. To achieve this objective effectively, this section contains critical recommendations for interventions on the key issues that need to be addressed.

5.3.1 CASS training and aspects of the future training

Although this study does not suggest that training alone will provide absolute solutions or answers to all the challenges confronting the implementation of CASS in the district, it is seen as a chief cornerstone upon which CASS policy could be established and effectively implemented. While CASS training might be expensive to roll out in the whole district, it must be considered

against the risks and the costs of using ungreased machines which may ultimately destroy the entire system. The training programmes for school managers should be structured in such a way that they cover a wide spectrum of aspects and should extend from being one or two days programmes to a semester programme. The semester programme should be split into two distinct modules, one for the HoDs and another for school principals and deputy principals. The components of HoDs' module should address issues such as policy guidelines and monitoring and support, while the components for the top management module should deal specifically with issues of human resource management such as staffing, motivation, and conflict management).

Alternatively, arrangements could be made with the University of South Africa's Faculty of Education to introduce a CASS module in their Advanced Certificate Programme for leadership management. It is important that this module should become compulsory for all educators enrolling for the Advance Certificate Programme. This is essential because, although not all educators are currently involved in managing the implementation of CASS in their schools, at least 50% of those who are not presently involved will be involved in future when elevated to school managers' posts.

In the view of the findings in this study, it could be recommended that the UNISA CASS module should encompass all the aspects that emerged from the findings such as procedures in moderation, interrogation of different assessment policies and guidelines, recording and reporting procedures, and new content. It could also be recommended that these aspects be included in the future district-level, cluster-level and school-level workshops. The training in these workshops ought to be done by competent and accredited companies, not by Department of Education's officials who lack in-depth understanding and knowledge of continuous assessment policies. Alternatively, the services of experts may be secured to offer such trainings. In fact, training should be offered by trainers who are familiar with challenges confronting the implementation of continuous assessment.

Another possible way of equipping school managers with the necessary knowledge of CASS is for the district to make arrangement with any accredited training provider offering the Unit Standard 115753 (Conducting Outcomes-Based Assessment) to offer the school managers with a

well-aligned programme that would address the different aspects of continuous assessment.

5.3.2 Challenges or problems working against the implementation of CASS

With regards to overcrowded classrooms, the Department of Education ought to provide enough classrooms and maintain the 1 - 35 ratio stipulation. This ratio will ensure that classes are easier to control, individual learners can receive the necessary attention, group work tasks will be easy to manage, and discipline easier to maintain. It is essential, therefore, for class sizes to be manageable in order to ensure effective implementation of CASS in schools.

With regard to workload, school managers should be excused from administrative duties and other activities that increase their workload and distract their attention from monitoring and supporting educators in the implementation of CASS. The recommendations regarding the discontinuity of learners' portfolios in an effort to relieve educators of their workload ought to be well-communicated to the districts as many curriculum advisors still expect educators to submit learner evidence in the old format. The Department of Education ought to engage in a robust campaign to return parents to school by introducing literacy projects. These literacy projects should focus on equipping these senior citizens with job-related skills and at the same time exposing them to the importance of taking charge of their children's education. The education of parents will also reduce learners' absenteeism and other disciplinary problems as many parents will be involved in the education of their children as either motivators or monitors. The education of parents will also come in handy when dealing with the attitude of learners towards education as children would not want to be outperformed by their parents. This could create a healthy competition at home which learners could transfer to the school environment resulting in academic excellence.

With regard to the problem relating to the new content, school managers, most particularly heads of departments, should be immersed in content training for two or more weeks. This is essential because for school managers to be innovative and creative in developing assessment tasks and their instruments, they should master content and be able to relate it to the context within which they operate. Another strategy to address the problem of content is that schools should identify

content gaps in their staff pool and fill them by means of educator rotation. This implies that schools should identify and utilise the content-strength of other educators within the staff pool to overcome the content-weakness of some educators in a particular subject. The anticipated animosity towards this strategy might arise from the fact that in schools with a poor structure, control and reporting could be serious hampering factors while in big schools where there is no equitable distribution of work, educators might resist rotation since it could be viewed as increasing their workload. Despite these challenges, the value of this strategy cannot be undermined. Another way of dealing with the content gap is to encourage educators to upgrade themselves in their specialised subjects so that they would be kept abreast of all the new additions to the prescribed content in their subjects.

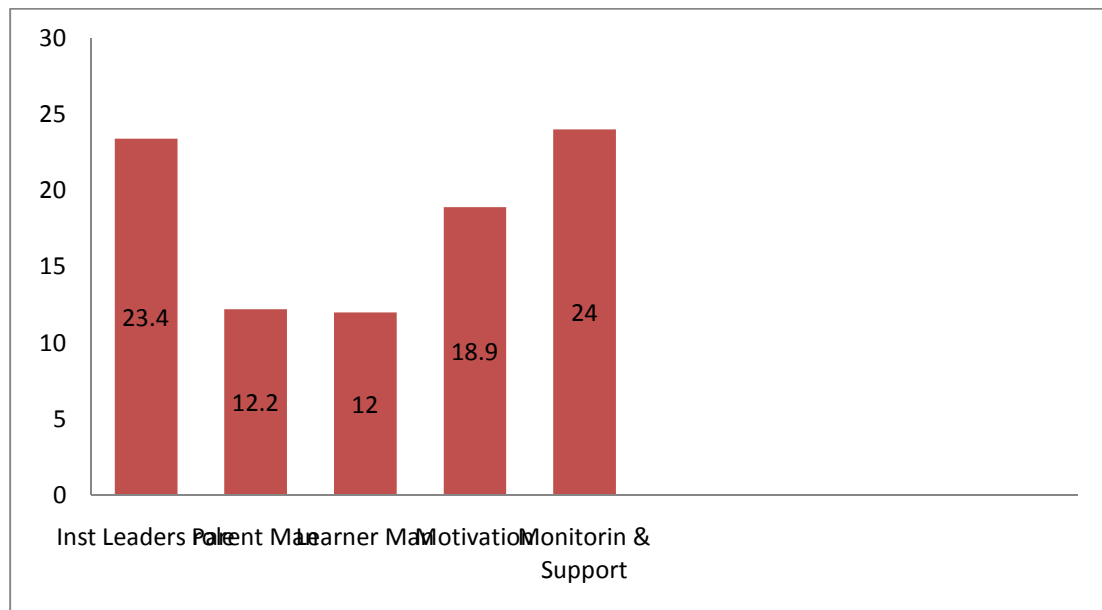
Furthermore, the findings recommended a few turn-around strategies which encompassed adequate support for educators and managers, intensive monitoring, stakeholders' involvement, policy review, and proper planning as interventions to address challenges associated with the implementation of continuous assessment (Section 4.4.1-Table 4.16).

5.3.3 The roles of school managers in the implementation of CASS

The lack of parent involvement, support, monitoring, and proper disciplinary measures is a huge problem in most of the schools in the district. To ensure that school managers consistently and continuously perform five “traditional” leadership and management roles in the implementation of CASS, schools should embark on what is referred to as the “School Profiling System”. This system involves determining “minimum factors” - those roles of school managers which are least performed among the five “traditional” leadership and management roles postulated in this study which seriously hinder the implementation of CASS at the classroom and school levels. As far as I'm concerned there is no school without “minimum factors”. The term does not necessary suggest that the school managers are “bad” in certain areas of their management roles; it simply means that concentrating on those “low point” roles will bring lasting progress to such a school. In this system, all five traditional leadership and management areas are assessed to determine which ones are least successfully performed by the school managers and then turn-around strategies are put in place to improve the low point ones. Figure 5.1 illustrate what is presented

as “School Profiling System”.

Figure 5.1 School Profiling System (My own example)



This figure represents my own example of the “School Profiling System” showing that the two “traditional” leadership and management roles which are least successfully performed by school managers are parent management and learner management. In this example, these leadership and management roles are “low point” roles which need urgent attention. Although it is not suggested that this system is the cure-all for all situations, its application might make school managers aware of areas they need to improve in order to successfully implement CASS in their schools. I thus recommend that in order to obtain accurate results from the “School Profiling System” intuition must be coupled with a scientifically sound analysis of the situation. When “low point” roles are identified, intervention in the form of training or any other means should be implemented to enhance performance in these management areas.

5.3.4 Resource provisioning

The resource provisioning emerges to be a new management role critical to facilitate the implementation of continuous assessment in the district. The lack of resources is a huge challenge for many schools in Mopani District and the focus to address it must be expedited. It

could also be recommended that the Department of Education speed up the process of filling up promotional posts in school where these posts exist. An annual survey should be conducted to determine how many school managers are in excess at their school staff establishments so that they may be quickly allocated to new schools. It would also be recommended that the movement and filling of management posts be done in the first term in order to avoid a situation where schools are left without managers in the second or third quarter of the year.

With regard to financial and teaching resources, it could be recommended that at least all rural schools must be credited with a quintile one status and facilities such as computer labs and libraries be provided to these schools. The annual per capita allocation for learners or norms and standards money in no-fee schools should be allocated and deposited into school accounts once in January so that resources may be acquired according to the school budget in the first term of the year. It must also be acknowledged that school principals in the district require training in handling school resources, most particularly financial and physical resources. In addition, the Department of Education should put rigid control mechanisms in place to regulate the use of school finances. In this way the Department of Education will ensure that school finances are not misappropriated by school principals and governing bodies.

5.3.5 Perception of school managers

It is recommended that the assessment policy be reviewed in order to include more tests and examinations. Furthermore, the school managers should be provided with enough resources such as computers and the Internet as it was evident in the findings that one of the factors contributing towards the managers' negative attitude is a lack of resources. It is further recommended that the school managers' workload be reduced by relieving them of administrative responsibilities by employing clerical staff in all secondary schools in Mopani District, most particularly in rural schools.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The main focus of this study was on the role of school managers in the implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training in Mopani District, Limpopo Province. In analysing the findings in this study, several areas for further research were identified. These are summarised below:

5.4.1 Continuous Assessment Accountability (CAA) model

The CAA model in the implementation of CASS developed in this study could only be regarded as an initial attempt to identify accountability patterns in the implementation of CASS; therefore, it needs further refinement.

5.4.2 CASS Training for school managers

Since it emerged that school managers were not provided with training on CASS per se before or after assuming their positions as managers of CASS implementation in schools, further research into the type and content of training programme is required. A need analysis should be considered to identify the key aspects of the future training required to prepare school managers.

5.4.3 The sixth management role in CASS implementation

It emerged from the findings that resource provisioning is a critical management role of the school managers. To complete the role puzzle, a thorough research and literature review in this management role are crucial to effectively address the challenges confronting educators and school managers in the implementation of CASS in the district.

5.4.4 School Profiling System

Further research on how schools could profile their minimum factors and which intervention strategies are required to improve the low point leadership and management roles need to be

conducted.

5.4.5 Extension of study findings

The study findings should be extended to other districts in Limpopo Province since most of the challenges associated with implementation of CASS are common and demand common interventions in the form of quality leadership and management approach. The extension of this study findings could determine relationships (if any) between context and various leadership and management roles played by school managers in addressing challenges such as learners' absenteeism, lack of parents' involvement, and workload.

5.5 SUMMARY

In Mopani District, school managers are relatively untapped sources of the most sought after solution in addressing the challenges associated with the implementation of CASS. In the dispensation when the South African Department of Education is under a mounting pressure to improve the quality of education in the country, and when the National Curriculum Statement is under close public scrutiny, district managers should seek to overcome the status quo by using creative school managers more effectively in the management roles postulated in this study. Therefore, training in parent management, learner management, monitoring and support, staff motivation, conflict management, and instructional leadership is required for school managers in Mopani District to address challenges confronting the implementation of CASS. In addition, training should be provided to school managers, particularly school principals in the new management role of providing resources which will make learners learn better and educators facilitate and assess better.

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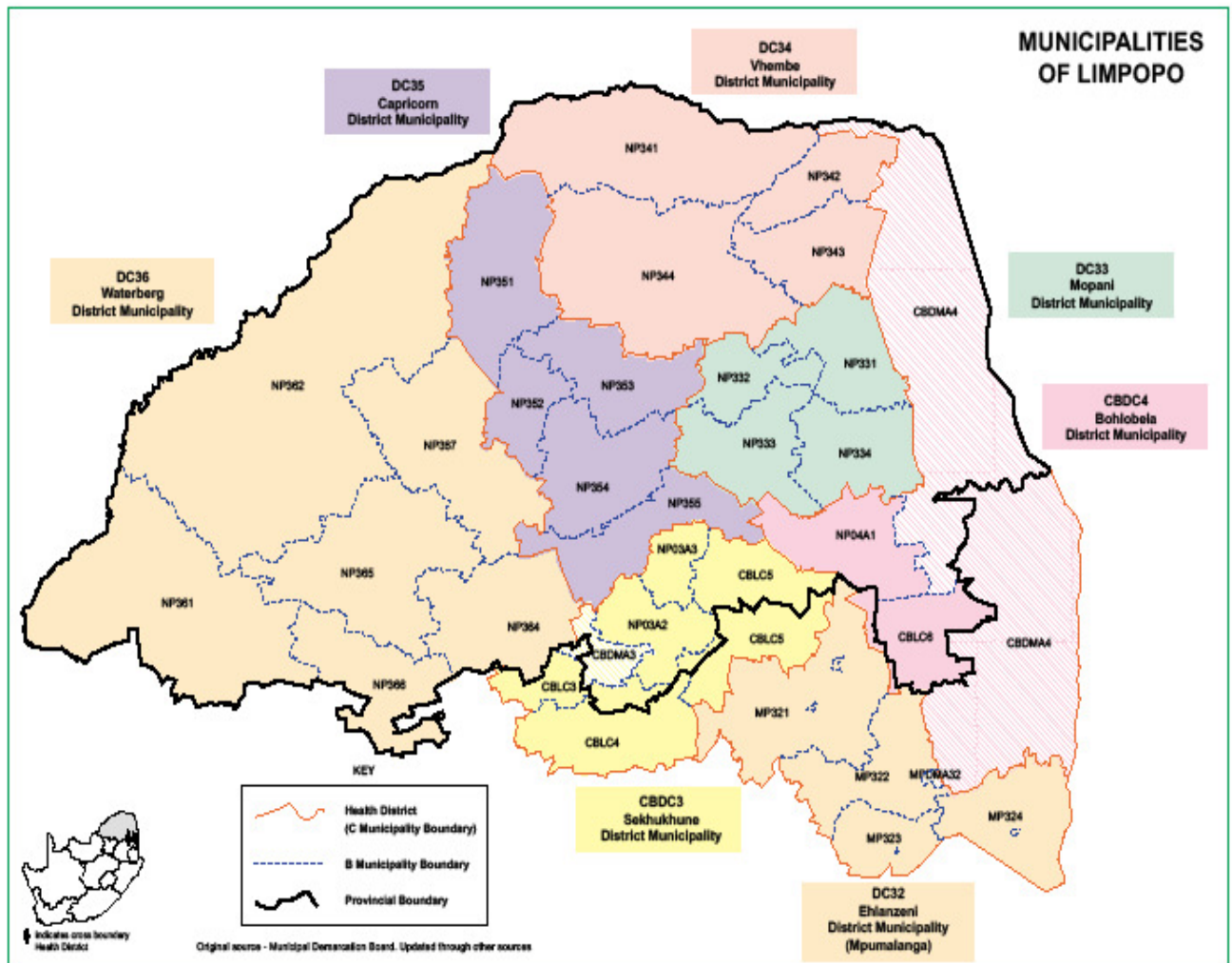
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MAP OF LIMPOPO



APPENDIX B: REQUISITION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH LETTER



College of Human Sciences
Department of Educational Studies
University of South Africa
P.O. Box 392
Pretoria
27 January 2010

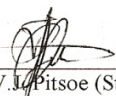
To whom it may concern

Re: Requisition for permission to conduct a research

On behalf of the Department of Educational Studies, I hereby request a permission for Mr ML Ramalepe, Student number: 4117-074-1, a MEd: Educational Management student, to conduct a research. His topic is "*The role of school managers in the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the Further Education and Training Band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province*". In order to fulfil the requirements for this degree, he is required to conduct structured interviews, do observations and a Pilot Study, and a Questionnaire Survey in the sampled schools in the Mopani District. This study has a potential of making a significant contribution to the theory and practice of School-Based Assessment in the South African education context.

Your co-operation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully


Dr V. J. Pitsoe (Study Promoter)

College of Human Sciences
Dept. of Educational Studies

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APPENDIX C: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION APPROVAL LETTER



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquires: Armeri, Telephone: 015-290 7951 e-mail: Armeri@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Mr. Ramalepe M.L.
P O BOX 2314
Tzaneen
0850

Dear Researcher

Request for Permission to Conduct Research

1. Your letter of request bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that you are granted permission to conduct research. The title of your research project is "THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUOUS ASSESMENT IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BAND IN MOPANI DISTRICT."
3. The following conditions should be observed:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with both the Circuit Offices and the schools concerning the conduct of the study. Care should be taken not to disrupt the academic programme at the schools.
 - 3.3 The study should be conducted during the first three terms of the calendar year as schools would be preparing themselves for the final end of year examinations during the fourth term.
 - 3.4 The research is conducted in line with ethics in research. In particular, the principle of voluntary participation in this research should be respected.
 - 3.5 You share with the Department, the final product of your study upon completion of the research assignment.
4. You are expected to produce this letter at schools/offices where you will be conducting your research, as evidence that permission for this activity has been granted.
5. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.


Head of Department

2010/02/15
Date

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF INFORMATION PROVIDING DETAILS OF THE STUDY

P O BOX 2314
TZANEEN
0850
19 APRIL 2010

Dear sir/madam

RE: DETAILS OF THE STUDY

Currently I am doing a Master of Education degree called “Educational Management” with the University of South Africa. My contact details are as follows:

- Physical address Stand No 104 Relela Village, Modjadji 0837
- Postal address P O Box 2314 Tzaneen 0850
- Cell Number 073 506 0507
- E-mail address tetelo4life@ymail.com

The name of my supervisor is Dr. Pitsoe V.J, his contact details are

- Office No AJH 6 – 104
- Telephone No 012 429 4436
- Email Address pitsovj@unisa.ac.za

It is my pleasure to provide you with the following details regarding the study:

The project title is “*The role of the school managers in the implementation of continuous assessment in the Further Education and Training band in Mopani district, Limpopo Province*”

I have approached you because of your experience in the field of management, particularly because you are a teacher who is attached to Mopani District and you know about the new educational reforms process in South Africa. I would also like to inform you of the following procedures during the research project:

- The length of the project will be two to three weeks

- The procedure will be to conduct questionnaires, have a look at the files you use when moderating and monitoring teachers' work (documentary analysis) and conduct interviews.
- If you feel uncomfortable with any procedure or question(s) posed, you are free not to answer it
- The project has no danger

I am hoping that at the end of this project you benefit knowledge.

A voice recording device will be used during the interviews; this will help during the analysis of data. However, if you feel uncomfortable with it you can tell me.

It is worth also knowing that during data collection and analysis the data will be stored in the secure cupboard at my home. Upon submission of my dissertation the data will be kept by the university. In addition you are assured also of anonymity and confidentiality and that no information about you will be divulged to any one.

Lastly, decision to participate will not result in any form of disadvantage: to participate in the project is not compulsory. As you will be participant you can withdraw at anytime you wish. This is irrespective of how far the project has gone. In other words participation is voluntary. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in my project.

Kind regards

Mr. Ramalepe M.L

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM

Letter of consent

Project Title

The role of school managers in the implementation of continuous assessment in the Further Education and Training band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

I have received the letter of information and invitation to participate in your study. And the details of study explained to me have satisfactory answered all my questions about the study and I understand that I may ask further questions as the study progresses.

I understand that allowing for my responses to be used in this study I am contributing positively to a body of knowledge about the role of school managers in addressing challenges confronting the implementation of CASS in our District. And I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study.

I agree to provide information on the understanding that it is completely confidential; my real name will not be used in the dissertation, and that the information I provide will only be used for the purpose of this study.

I Agree/Do not agree (tick the option desired) to be interviewed for the purposes of this study and to complete the questionnaire.

Signature Date:

For further information, contact Ramalepe M.L at 073 506 0507 or tetelo4life@ymail.com

APPENDIX F: QUESTIONNAIRE (SMT)

To Head of Department (HOD)

This questionnaire is addressed to Head of Department (HOD) and seeks to elicit information about the practice of CASS in their schools.

It is important that you answer each question carefully and honestly so that the information provided reflects the **situation in your school** as accurately as possible. All information or replies in this questionnaire will be treated with strict confidentiality and anonymously.

I would like to thank you in advance for the time and effort you have put into responding to this questionnaire.

Kind regards

Mr. Ramalepe Matome Liphy

A **Biographical data** (circle number for each item).

1	Gender	Female	1	male	2
2	Age (years)	20 - 25	26 - 35	36 - 45	46 - 55
		1	2	3	4
3	Post level (Educator = 1; HOD = 2; Deputy Principal = 3; Principal = 4)	1	2	3	4
4	Teaching experience	0 - 5 yrs	6 - 10 yrs	11 - 15 yrs	16 - 20 yrs
		1	2	3	4
5	Work load (periods per week)	0 - 15	16 - 25	26 - 35	36 +
		1	2	3	4
6	Number of workshops/training on CASS	0	1	2	3
					4 +
7	Language spoken	English	1	Sepedi	7
		Afrikaans	2	IsiZulu	8
		Sesotho	3	IsiXhosa	9
		Xitsonga	4	IsiNdebele	10
		Tshivenda	5	IsiSwati	11
		Setswana	6	Other:	12
8	School locality	Township	Town	Village	Farm
		1	2	3	5

For official use only

V1

V2

V3

V4

V5

V6

V7

V8

B Knowledge of the theory and practice of CASS (circle number for each item).

To ensure success in the implementation of CASS in my school, I must:

		1	2	3	4	5
		strongly disagree	Tend to disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to agree	strongly agree
1	Enroll in or attend training programmes e.g. courses in university, workshops by publishing companies or NPOs.	1	2	3	4	5
2	View CASS as an on-going diagnostic and school-based process that improves the teaching-learning process.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Possess adequate knowledge of relevant Legislative Framework informing the implementation of CASS e.g. Assessment Guidelines.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Differentiate between the traditional norm-reference assessment and CASS(criteria-reference assessment).	1	2	3	4	5
5	Understand that CASS is credible when it embraces the principles of fairness, validity, reliability, and flexibility.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Be actively involved in learner assessment in the FET band in order to be a perfect role model.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Be aware of the historical and philosophical background of continuous assessment.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Understand different models and methods of CASS as practiced globally and locally.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Have adequate knowledge of the underpinning principles and characteristics of continuous assessment.	1	2	3	4	5

V9

V10

V11

V12

V13

V14

V15

V16

V17

C Perceptions towards the school managers' new roles in the implementation of CASS in a school environment.(circle number for each item).

How would you rate the following aspects of your new role in the implementation of CASS policy in your school?

		Very Poor	Fairly Poor	Fairly good	Very Good
1	Providing instructional leadership by overseeing curriculum planning, developing and managing assessment strategies, etc.	1	2	3	4
2	Creation of good school structure that allows teachers to communicate their predicaments in the implementation of CASS.	1	2	3	4
3	Creation of positive school climate and culture which reduce learners' absenteeism and promote learners and teachers motivation.	1	2	3	4
4	Management of parent involvement by encouraging cooperation, participation, and partnership of parents.	1	2	3	4
5	Dealing with learners' disciplinary problems e.g. learners who miss assessment tasks without genuine reasons.	1	2	3	4
6	Motivation of teachers to implement CASS despite the challenges encountered.	1	2	3	4
7	Monitoring teachers in their practice of CASS by conducting school-based moderation in the school.	1	2	3	4
8	Providing technical support and leadership for the teachers so that they successfully implement CASS in the school.	1	2	3	4
9	Resolving and managing conflicts resulting from the implementation of CASS by applying different strategies or techniques of conflict resolution.	1	2	4	4

V18

V19

V20

V21

V22

V23

V24

V25

V26

	How would you rate the level of your satisfaction with the following issues pertaining to your new role as a manager of assessment and status of CASS implementation in your school.	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
10	Parent-Teacher partnership and cooperation in the implementation of CASS	1	2	3	4	V27
11	State of learner's discipline: The manner in which learners adhere to the school's code of conduct.	1	2	3	4	V28
12	Team planning in continuous assessment: The manner in which subject teams plan assessment together.	1	2	3	4	V29
13	Protection of instructional time through efficient timetabling that includes curricular and extracurricular activities	1	2	3	4	V30
14	Organisational structure: How different roles, responsibilities and functions are structured to accomplish a goal of implementing CASS.	1	2	3	4	V31
15	School climate: Feelings and attitudes of teachers, parents and learners about the school.	1	2	3	4	V32
16	School culture: Shared ideas, that is, assumptions, values, and beliefs that give the school its identity/distinctive way of life of the school classes.	1	2	3	4	V33
17	Motivating team members to work hard toward shared vision and become leaders themselves in the process of implementing of CASS.	1	2	3	4	V34
18	Cooperation of staff in your new role as a manager of the new assessment policy	1	2	3	4	V35
19	Learning ways to deal with differences while maintaining respect among individuals and commitment to the school's vision	1	2	3	4	V36
	How often do you perform the following functions (Circle number for each item)?	Never	rarely	sometimes	often	
21	How frequent do you conduct moderation of teachers' work in your department or school?	1	2	3	4	V37
22	How often do you organise subject meetings in your school where teachers plan together and interrogate policies (Assessment Guidelines)?	1	2	3	4	V38
23	How often are the problems that teachers encounter in the implementation of CASS discussed in the general staff meeting?	1	2	3	4	V39
24	How often do you conduct class visits for the purposes of monitoring and support?	1	2	3	4	V40
25	How often do you hold parents meeting or evenings to discuss issues related to learners' assessment, progress and discipline?	1	2	3	4	V41
26	How often do you meet the learner representative council to discuss issues related to learners' assessment, progress and discipline?	1	2	3	4	V42
General						
1	What challenges / problems have you or teachers in your schools experienced in implementing CASS in your class?					V43
2	In your opinion, how will you address challenges and problems impeding the implementation of CASS in schools in Mopani district, especially dysfunctional schools? (suggest few strategies)					V44
3	For future training and workshop purposes, what aspects of CASS would you like see included in the training programmes?					V45

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

Interviewer: Mr. Ramalepe M.L Name of Interviewee: Mr. Rat

Rank: Head of Department Date : 28 April 2010

INT-RAM: Do you head any department in your school?

RAT : Yes, I do. I am heading the department of social sciences in my school.

INT-RAM: Do you feel that the introduction of criteria referenced assessment or CASS helps learners to learn better than the traditional norm referenced assessment dominated by tests and examinations?

RAT: Eh I can't say it is better, I can't say it is less better. But I think it will depend on the situations. Sir, let me put it reference on the situations in our schools, more especial the black schools where the enrolment is very high. Eh it becomes a bit difficult because in the process of assessing you must see to it that at least there is an assessment that will be done by individual learners and that will be done by groups. In case individual assessment it is really ineffective because you cannot be able to monitor and check as to whether is relying on, the learner is relying on his own ideas or relying on others. But in a situation where we find that the class is manageable, is a good size class, then I can say it can be very very effective considering that at the end of assessing you need to make sure you control that work and the in a class that is large in number is really going to be difficult t control effectively, you end up not knowing as to whether your aim has been achieved or not.

INT-RAM: Have you received any training on Continuous Assessment?

RAT: Emm, training it depends on what you mean by training. Eh, you see sometimes I

can sit with you for ten minutes or so giving me information on something you may think that you trained me, but I think the training we received is not I can't call it proper training. Yes, training has been received but you find that eh the training we receive is a one day training that is dominated by lot of talking and lot of other things not concentrating on the CASS itself. But at the end of the day, there is less we benefit from such kind of training. And then I think the training is not enough, so to say.

INT-RAM: OK! Em, given the insufficient, insufficient training, how do you then implement, if the training wasn't sufficient?

RAT: The implementation is according to a teacher's understanding, well I do implement and do pursue the line that I think is right more especial in my department where in which I eh draw the lines along which I preferred my people in my department to work along. But really it is up to individual teachers even though we do meet on the departmental meeting we discuss on how best we can implement, actually we always come up with different ideas, so as such I can't say there is a specific way we are pursuing but we are hanging in there.

INT-RAM: As Head of department, what do you do to ensure that teachers adhere to the assessment guidelines when conducting CASS in their classrooms?

RAT: Ja, that I do they do make sure they adhere to them because there are policy guidelines, is just that in interpreting policy guidelines he well may differ from one person to the another and sometimes we do have them but we do understand the same way, but we look into the basics any way, the LOs, the ... eh ... eh.. what is that again, eh ...Ok, let me say that all those that we need to look at, the ASs, the Los, those are the things that we consider much to we try by all means to satisfy them then after we feel that

is when we feel we have done what we are expected to do. But really eh we feel we understand them the way we understand them we are not just exactly sure as to whether we are doing it the right way as I say we didn't receive proper training on this.

INT-RAM: How do you deal with learners who miss assessment tasks without any genuine reasons OR learners who undermine reasonable orders from teachers during assessment?

RAT: Ja, initially I referred to rural school really is difficult to have them assessed at all where in which everyone has done assessment, the main reason being that most of these learners they just bunk classes they just absentee themselves without reasons and basically as I was trying to enquire I found that most of them they are staying with elderly people at home, some are bread winners and there are the fathers and mothers at home so it difficult to get them to school everyday, so we do try to deal with by the way of enforcing, eh, some the assessment (-) but we do succeed on formal assessment when coming to informal assessment is really very very difficult because you find that a learner has to bunk school for three days, has to be absent for three days really you cannot expect that learner to come and replace all the work that has been done in three days as you will be dragging behind concentrating on one learner as I indicated we have got large a number of learners in each class. For argument sake eh I have got classes that eh have learners eighty learners and plus one class, it is really difficult to concentrate on each of them, but on formal assessment we do concentrate much where in which we do give them another work if there were not there during the day of assessment.

INT-RAM: How do you ensure that parents participate in the assessment of their children and support teachers in dealing with learners' disciplinary problems?

RAT: Ja, we involve them by calling them at school in case learners do not participate or maybe they are just reluctant to do the work. We involve them by sending work homeworks at home where in which there are suppose to help learners. Sometimes we do a lot of investigation in which parents have to take part in trying to explain one or two things, but really I must to confess it is very very difficult, as I have just mentioned to you that most learners are staying alone at home, so they have to go all around in the village trying to ask this and that eh on how to solve some of the questions that the challenge that they are getting in the assignment given. And really the question of them staying alone without parents makes it difficult for us to involve parents effectively, well we do on those learners that have got parents available when we call them. That is how we involve them.

INT-RAM: Generally, you are saying that the parent involvement is not satisfactory?

RAT: Really is not. I can't even say it is fifty percent satisfactory, it is far below, eh, I can say it below even twenty percent.

INT-RAM: What challenges are you or your teachers encountering in the implementation of CASS?

RAT: Em, firstly, large numbers of learners in class, the question of marking and controlling the work, the question of ill discipline, and the question of absenteeism. These are the main challenges that we do face each and every day according to me.

INT-RAM: How do you support and motivate teachers who are challenged by the new assessment policy in their classrooms?

RAT: Ja, those who come to me try to show their challenges I normally sit them down I give my best I give all at least what I know and the what I think is right, but hence I must

indicate that what I know I can't exactly is absolutely right, I just at least challenge them to give me their ideas and try to align their ideas with mine to try to pave a path where in which we can together say at the end that we tried to defeat the challenge, whatever challenge is there. But with the little knowledge I have, as head of department I read a lot in trying to cover all the spheres of challenges that the educators may bring, most the questions I do have answers, I just can't say exactly I'm 100% in answering them, but I try my best.

INT-RAM: OK, do you think the teachers in your department are energised to really achieve the goal of the new assessment policy, are they motivated enough to implement?

RAT: Emm, motivated they are, energetically, yes they are energised, but you see um, they could be more effective if maybe the situation was just so good for them to work on, like in case we were having normal classes, you know the issue of the numbers in class is very very serious when coming to CASS because under my understand is that you must at least know each and every learner in your class and with our situation is really impossible because you find yourself attending more than four classes in one day with each class having more than eighty learners so it is really difficult. But I can say they try because what they are doing compared to the models C schools that I normally visit trying to find out how best they do things I find them to be working twice as hard as those people that are having normal classes. And I wish one day the department can see that and try to build as many schools as possible try to align the question of teacher-pupil ratio so that it suits the needs and requirements of CASS.

INT-RAM: In your opinion, how will you address challenges and problems impeding the implementation of CASS in schools in Mopani District, especially dysfunctional schools?

Please suggest few strategies that you have in mind?

RAT: First I think is the question of going down to the road trying to find out actually what is the problem. You know these rural areas are so diverse, in some areas learners are just totally uncontrollable such that even a teacher who is more than dedicated cannot in any way try to pursue them to do the right thing. Because they will tell of their own role models who were never at school who are succeeding in one way or the other, but at the same time comparing that role model of theirs with you that you are a teacher you claim to be educated, you claim to be giving them light but yet you fail to get light yourself because may you, I'm sure you know how poor teacher are, and as such is difficult for them when they try to compare us trying to give light to them to those people they think is their role model. But any way trying to solve the problem I think It can be the involvement of the department by way of dividing these big schools into smaller schools that can be managed easily. By way of not demanding unnecessary, not giving unnecessary pressure to teachers where in which, I'm sure you are aware of the situation at school that is happening at school that every quarter they will sent you forms where in which you must the number of written works, the number of assignment given, the number of investigation a learner has to carry, you must fill which tasks have been met. And for you to meet all those things you end up losing focus of what you are at school for, you end up losing focus that you must teach the learner to understand, you must teach the learner to know exactly and understand what you are telling them about. You end up being there to achieve what they will require at the end of the quarter forgetting about the real goal there the learners. So it's fairly challenging, but as I say we are coping. I can't say I am have a specific model in which can be able to solve the situation, the problem,

but using so many ideas and mechanism, ja, we are surviving. At least we are getting something we just don't get below bar when coming to percentage in matric.

INT-RAM: OK. The last question in conclusion, for future training and workshop purposes, what aspects of CASS would you like see included in the training programmes or in the workshop?

RAT: Umm! I think, things that I think can be included in the CASS or in training, I would like the very same people who are training educators to convert a class of educators they are training into a maybe a class of learners at school where in which they can give us an assessment try to control that assessment as effective as possible on their own of course because it will be very much incomparable to control to assess the work of educators compared to that of learners, because learners you see sometimes when you say you give ten minutes to complete the task some will need 30 minutes you period is over you have to come another day instead of going on you have back and redo the same work. But I want them to face head on the challenge of the number of pupil in class, I know it can't be a direct way of training teachers to work on CASS but if they can at least be able to put themselves in the boot of the teacher who is in class facing a large number of learners maybe that's where we can say is the starting point for our training because we may address so many things, say for example, teachers are made aware of what are assessment standards, what are learning outcomes, but you find that in actual sense they can't practice that at their respective school because of many barriers that are there, but remember the department will claim we trained you have got knowledge of this you must apply and really rather impossible to apply in such numbers as I just indicated. If you can just listen to my explanation of things you will understand that many times I

complain about large numbers, it really important that we note that because it the same reason that make everything impossible. If the numbers were reasonable controllable then it will be easy for us to control. but any way I think I will also wish that the department could at least one year cut normal learning year cut it by three months if possible where in which teachers could be taken for in-service training, that I think go a long way in trying to help this where in which we can do this things practically time and again until we are used to them. Remember in most cases basically teachers are trained for three years to try and absorb and master whatever they will be doing at school, but come OBE, come CASS we are trained for a day or some hours how do we master that, and we cannot take pride and say we know and understand everything because we are shallow on that. But any way that how I think can be addressed.

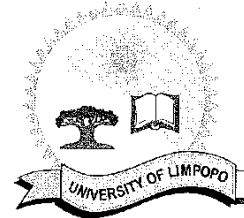
APPENDIX H: CERTIFICATE FROM EDITOR

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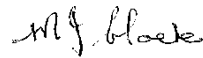
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I hereby certify that I edited Mr M.L. Ramalepe's dissertation entitled *The Role of School Managers in the Implementation of Continuous Assessment (CASS) in the Further Education and Training (FET) Band in Mopani District, Limpopo Province* till the end of the Bibliography.



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5 November 2010